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Paul Walton, Zeit Guy

By E. Jean Carroll

The Oscar Wars • Travel Like a Millionaire in Southeast Asia

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MARCH 15, 1999

NEW YORK

MAR 11 1999

Q: What do these people have in common?

A: Howard Rubenstein.

The tangled web of New York's most powerful public-relations man **By Michael Gross**

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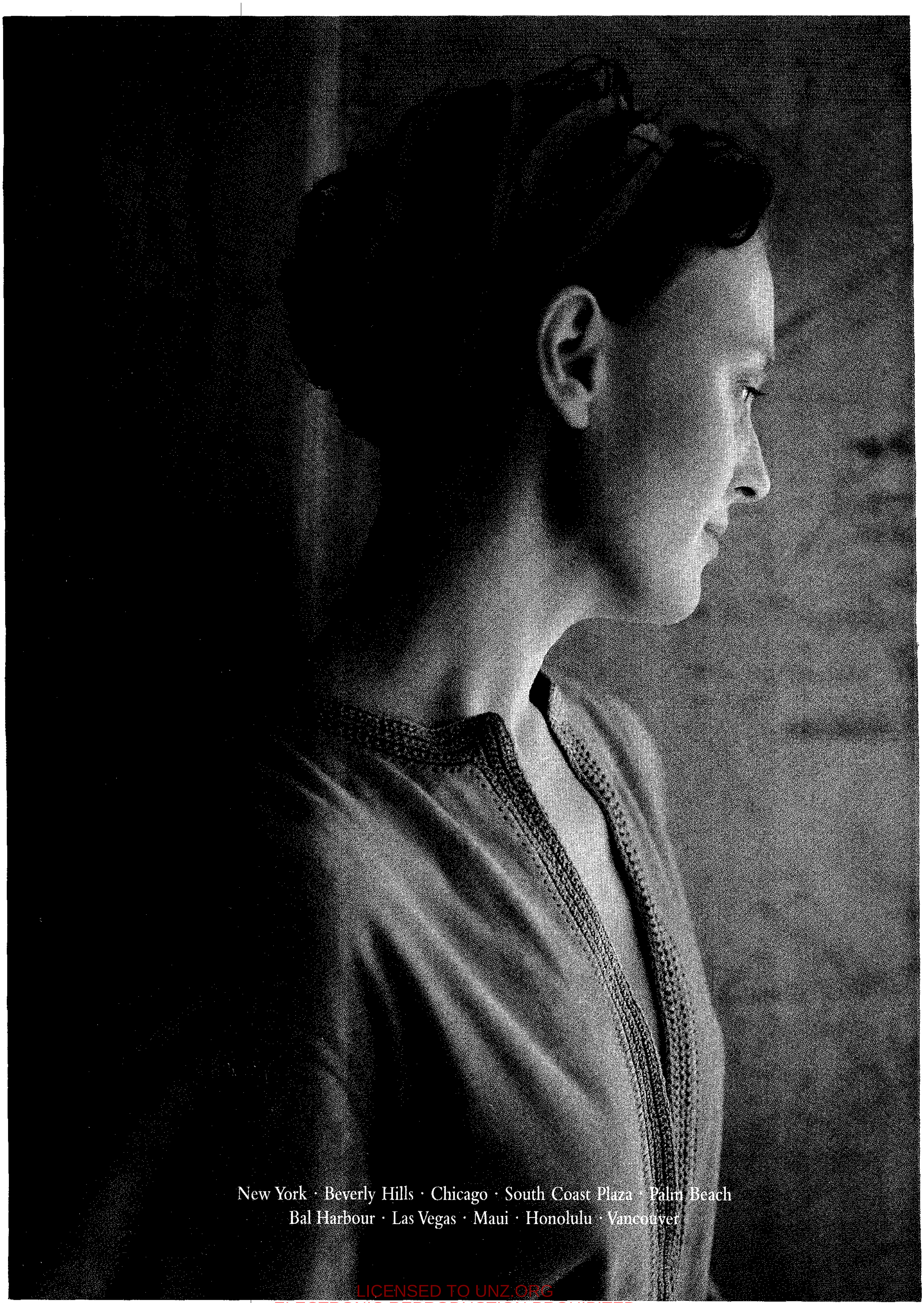
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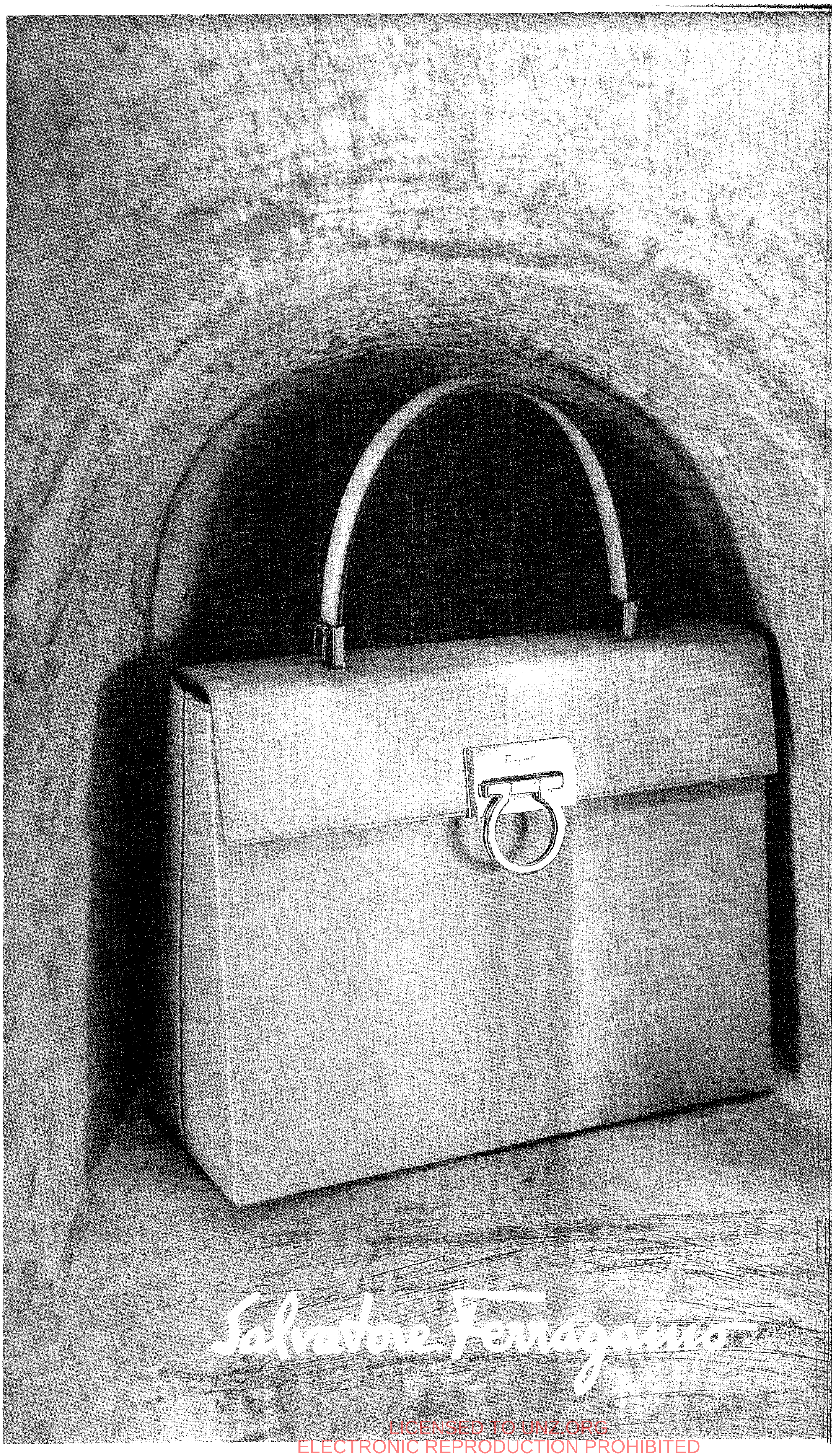
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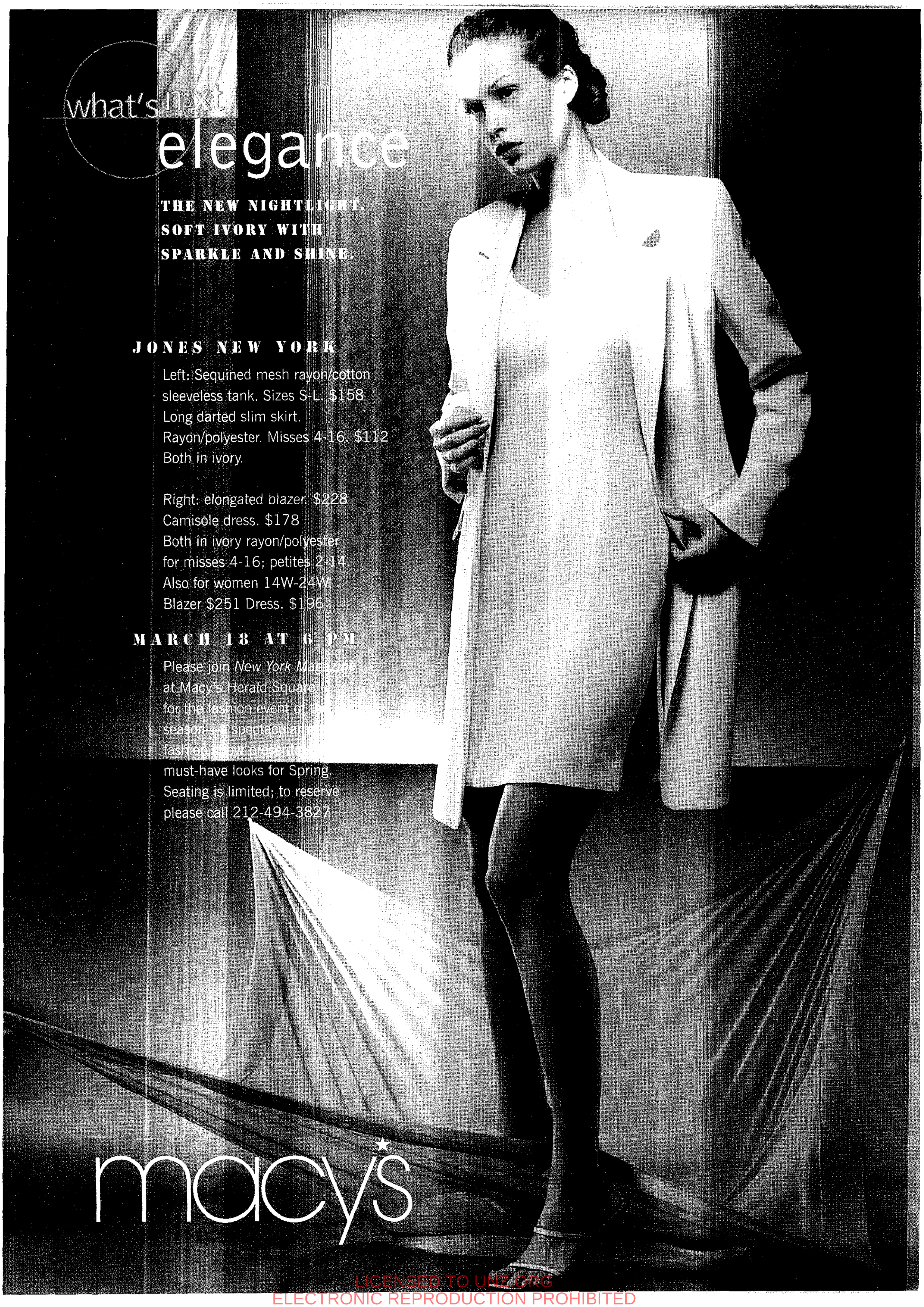

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Rayon/polyester. Misses 4-16. $112
Both in ivory.

Right: elongated blazer. $228
Camisole dress. $178
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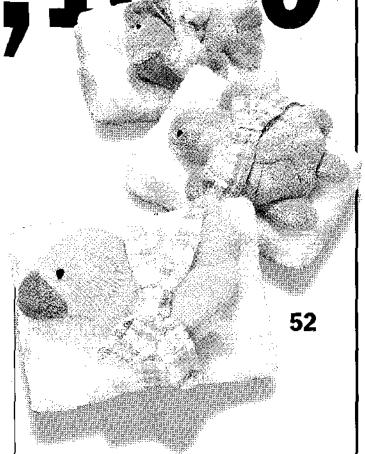
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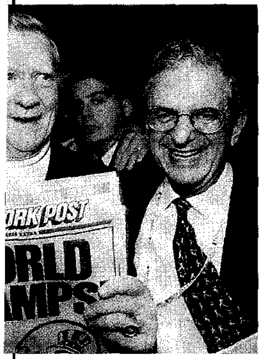
> *"People listen when you mention Howard's name. I like to be taken seriously. Howard has taken me seriously. He's like my uncle. My samurai uncle."*
>
> SARAH FERGUSON, DUCHESS OF YORK, PAGE 28



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By E. Jean Carroll

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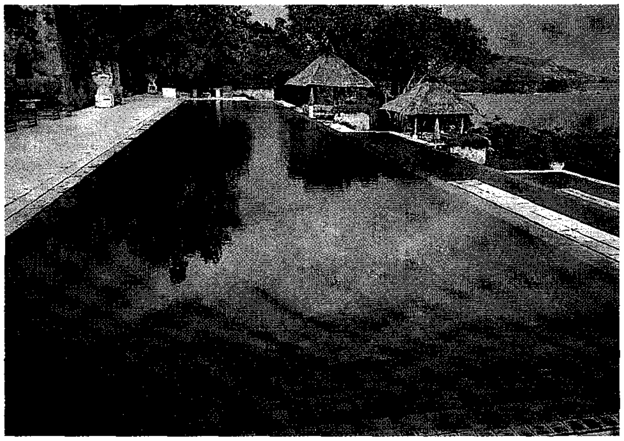
By Jennifer Senior

Nicole's gone; get *over* it. What Patrick Marber's *Closer* lacks in nudity, this new Broadway play more than makes up in take-no-prisoners sex talk.

44 Delusions of Grandeur

By Douglas Cooper

Go East. There's never been a better time. The Asian economic crisis has made luxurious digs in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, and Bali accessible to the budget traveler. There's only one drawback: You may never want to leave your five-star room to check out the local color.



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LETTERS MARCH 15, 1999

Big Spender

Are Lewis Katz's controversial plans for Newark philanthropy or another guise for urban renewal?; 'Life Is Beautiful' demonstrates the power of a father's love.

TOO BAD! AT FIRST, I WAS PLEASANTLY stunned by the new, charitable Nets owners, cheering to myself that sports-club owners are not all Steinbrenner clones ["Hoops Spring Eternal," by David D. Kirkpatrick, February 15]. But alas, Katz and company should stick to sports and working with people. Their vision of "renewing" downtown Newark by condemning a 40-block area and imposing their notion of what is right is a surefire recipe for catastrophe. It has worked that way in every city in America where that approach has been taken.

Roberta Brandes Gratz
Author, Cities Back From the Edge
MANHATTAN

LEWIS KATZ AND I GREW UP TOGETHER IN Camden. This article truly captures the spirit and essence of Lewis. He is a great humanitarian who has never forgotten what it means to have to work very hard for everything you want in life. He wants to give others the opportunity to excel and to enrich their lives. He opens the doors for all.

Lucille Leonard Gartenberg
LAKEWOOD, N.J.

REGARDING YOUR STORY ON LEWIS KATZ, we must suggest that Phil has been deposed and henceforth the word *philanthropy* is changed to *Lewanthropy*.

Irwin Hyman
HOLLYWOOD, FLA.

On the Bubble

THE BEAUTY OF THE MARKET RIGHT NOW IS that it is a lot like horse racing: Every day is different, and the only thing for sure is that there will be trading ["The Bottom Line: Bubble Wrap," by James Surowiecki, February 15]. It seems you discounted the power of day traders. They are the ones who make a "major dog" a Thoroughbred. They are the ones who make a Prodigy a winner in the short term. It's daily horseplaying.

The day trader rides hot sectors and momentum. You were correct with supply and demand, but day traders take it to the next level. They look for hot sectors (tech, Internet) and for stocks with small floats (the number of shares in public trading). This way they maximize the volatility of this hot sector. Buy fast, sell fast. Quick, easy, and with no regard to the quality of the company.

If I can sit at home in front of my computer and trade for a living, I'm sure millions of people are doing the same thing. I'm no genius. Fortunately, professional Wall Street isn't, either. The only difference is they get paid off the top (and have to get up earlier).

Richard Charles Bloom
BOCA RATON, FLA.

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York *Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, or sent via e-mail to NYLetters@aol.com. Please include a daytime phone number.*

Open Invitation

WHAT A DELIGHT TO READ THE CONVERSATION celebrating 30 years of the crankiest critics in New York ["Guess Who's Coming to Dinner," by Maer Roshan, February 1]. Gael Greene and John Simon are truly a pair of *monstres sacrés* who approach their lives, as they approach their art, unapologetically. The next-best thing to reading the article would be to transfer the experience in front of a TV or movie camera. "My Dinner With Gael and John"? Attention, Charlie Rose!

Jean-Claude Baker
MANHATTAN

Last Word

IN COMPARING *THE LAST DAYS,* JAMES MOLL'S new documentary on surviving the Holocaust, with Roberto Benigni's *Life Is Beautiful,* Peter Rainer says that *The Last Days'* "straightforward accounting is perhaps the only respectable way to deal with the enormity" of the subject, and that Benigni "offends" with his "paltry" metaphor of transforming the camps into a "bloodless fairy-tale fable between father and son" ["Movies: My Beautiful Launderer," February 15]. I must say I am offended by Rainer's paltry understanding of Benigni's use of metaphor. *Life Is Beautiful* is not about the unspeakable horrors and agony of the Holocaust—it is about the incredible ability of human beings to surmount ghastly horror and to have unquestionable faith in their power to survive. Joshua, the young boy, says at the end of the film that his father's "fairy-tale fable" was his greatest gift. How can the gift of life offend?

Linda Tucker
HEMPSTEAD, N.Y.

IT WAS WORTH READING YOUR ENTIRE FEBRUARY 8 issue for this line from John Leonard's review of NBC's *The '60s* ["Television: We Were Overcome"]: "So what if *The '60s* is slick nostalgia? At least it's Grace Slick nostalgia." Right on, man.

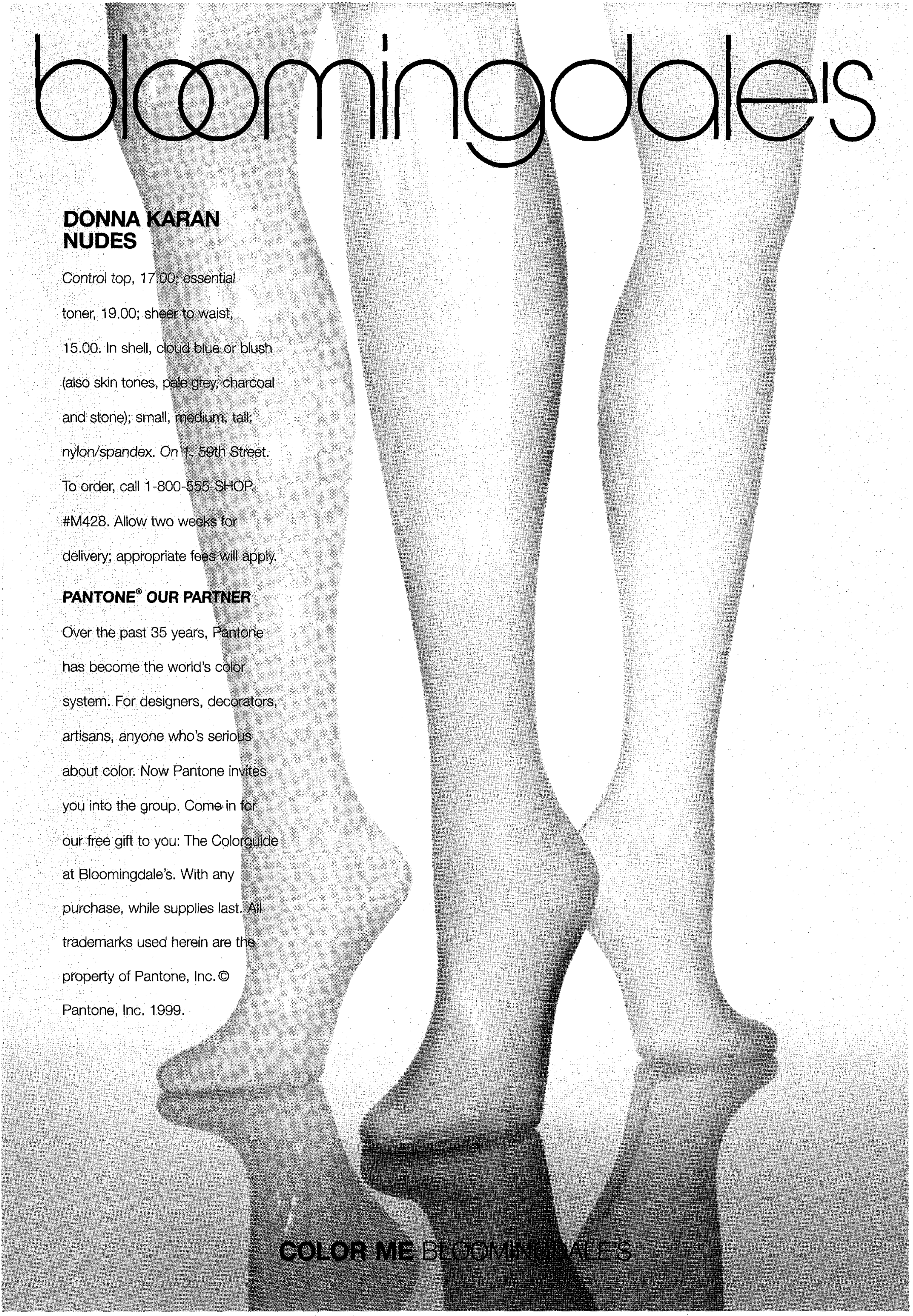
Jennifer Peltz
WELLINGTON, FLA.

I TAKE EXCEPTION TO A REMARK JOHN Leonard made in his review of *Stephen King's Storm of the Century* ["Television: No Menace an Island," February 15]. In the concluding paragraph, he states that the "fisherfolk" at the New England town meeting are "as toad-ugly as a bunch of Deep South or Old West lynch-mobsters, only wearing nicer sweaters." There was no need for him to mention the South in the Stephen King review, but he managed to work in such insults where they are completely out of place. I suspect Leonard once got a bad meal traveling through Alabama or Georgia, but that should not give him license to attack a region which has produced a tremendous number of great writers and artists.

W. Kenneth Holditch
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

Clarification In "Party Like It's 1999" (by Gillian Duffy and Jo B. Hoffman, February 15), the Ruth Messinger cocktail-party fund-raiser (attended by Hillary Clinton) at the home of Walter Kaye that was mentioned in the Saffron 59 item was catered by Table of Contents, and some of the food that was served was subcontracted out to Irene Wong of Saffron 59.

Correction Due to an editing error, the London theater weekend (No. 27) in last week's "52 Weekends" issue had an incorrect byline. It was written by Vanessa Friedman, not Ian Phillips. ■



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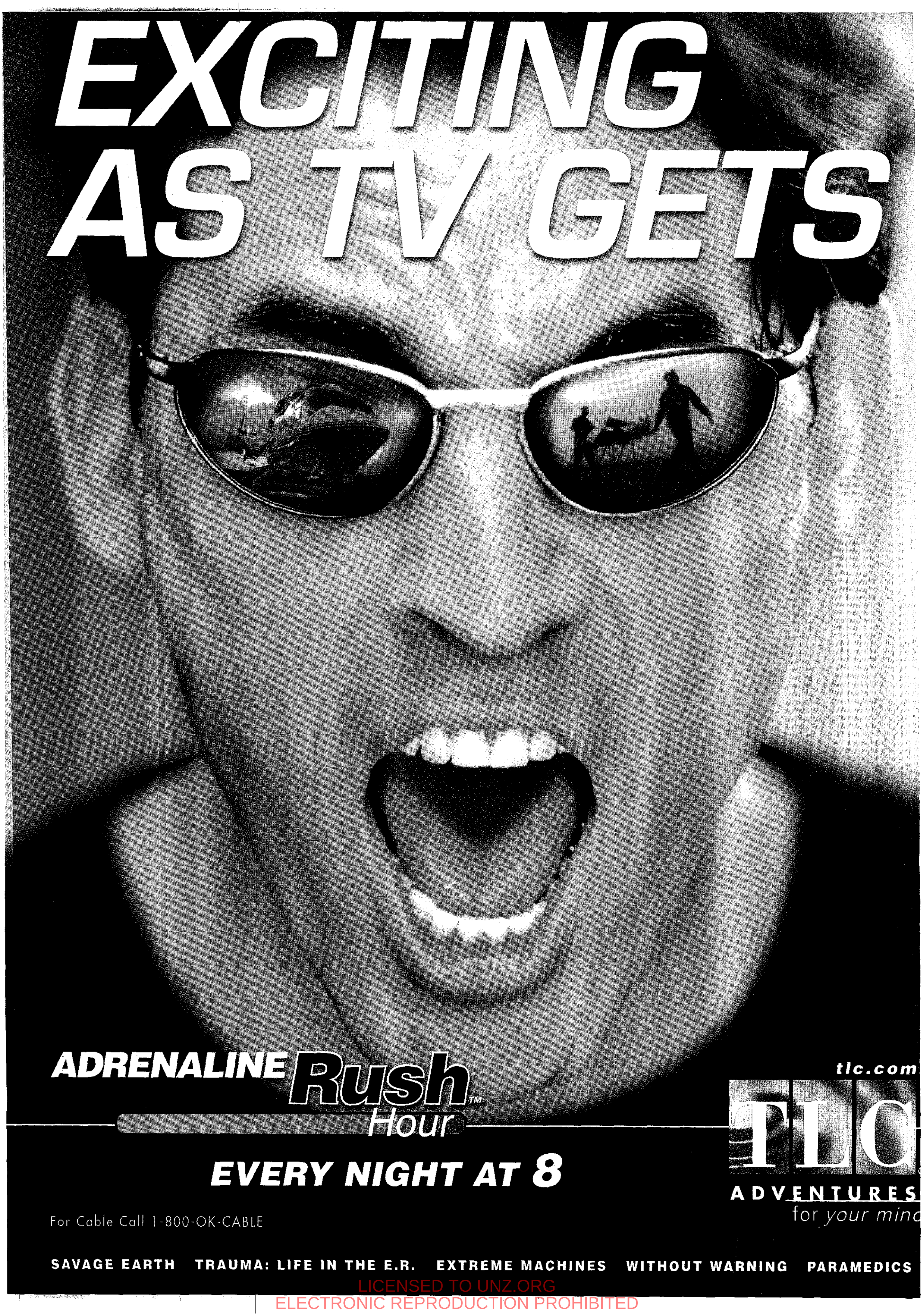
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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

INTELLIGENCER

OCTOBER SURPRISE IN MARCH?

In January, the news hit that **Barry Diller** was going to pick over **Edgar Bronfman Jr.**'s carcass yet again by snapping up October Films and parts of Polygram's film division from Bronfman's Universal. Now, according to a well-placed Hollywood source, both sides are close to making a deal, and it looks like Killer Diller may well be back in the movie business this year. Bronfman was ready to sell October to Diller back in January, but his minority partners wouldn't go along. Diller's January offer for the company that released *The Apostle, Breaking the Waves,* and *Secrets and Lies* was either $10 million to $15 million (per *Daily Variety*) or $20 million to $30 million (per *The Hollywood Reporter*). Both agree that Diller would have paid with stock in his USA Networks—a company that was created when Diller bought Universal's domestic TV operations a year and a half ago.

STRAUS'S DISSONANT OVERTURES

Even if **Monica Lewinsky** herself doesn't whine about the rough handling she regularly gets in **Cindy Adams**'s column, her stepdad, **Peter Straus**, isn't so patient. The press-savvy Straus, whose company owns eleven radio stations and five newspapers in New York and New Jersey, recently called the *Post,* according to a media insider, to complain about Adams's Monica coverage, citing an alleged inaccuracy in reporting Monica's current job search. The undaunted gossip grande dame says she did get wind of a grievance but points out that Monica has never personally complained, and that the only other time a family member called was to object to the misspelling of *Straus*. Says Adams, "I pee on her every week, and *this* is what they complain about?" Straus denies having made the calls.

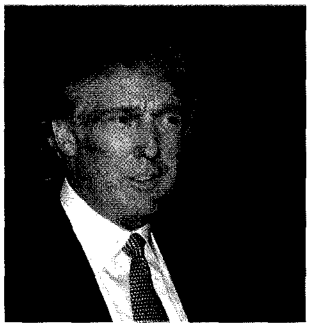
MADONNA'S AMATEUR WAXER

Madonna may have been a big winner at the Grammys this year, but her night ended in a bit of a disaster. After shuttling with a bunch of pals over to the party her label, Maverick, tossed at L.A.'s Les Deux Cafés, the currently brunette chanteuse was happily letting loose on the dance floor when an oversize candle tipped over and covered her with wax. "It started at her head and dripped all the way down," recounts one observer. "The person who knocked it over moved away so fast we never found out who it was." Friends, including the singer **Maxwell**, rushed over and alternately applied warm water and ice in an effort to remove the hardening liquid from her hair and clothing, but the situation was already out of control. "It ruined her entire night," according to the source. "There had been such a great vibe in that room, and suddenly the party came to an abrupt halt." Since when does hot wax ruin Madonna's night?

OP-ED ROMANCES, PRO AND CON

In this post-Monica age, it turns out that romance can hit even editorial-page editors. **Michael Kramer**, whose ex, Judge **Kimba Wood**, finally married the kazillionaire **Frank Richardson**, is now dating Dr. **Anne Dyson**. She's the daughter of the late Charles Dyson, an architect of the Roosevelt administration's Lend-Lease Act who later founded one of the nation's largest privately held investment companies. Dyson's 1997 obituary reported that his industrial businesses alone generated annual sales of $600 million. One of his sons, **John Dyson**, used to be a deputy mayor for **Rudy Giuliani**. Anne, a pediatrician who is active in the family's charities, was fixed up with the editorialist by **Calvin** (Bud) and **Alice Trillin**, reports a friend. Recently a top editor at *Brill's Content,* Kramer is now the opinion editor of the Sunday *Daily News,* whose five-page section debuts on March 28. Meanwhile, **Howell Raines**, who runs the New York *Times*'s editorial pages, was, until very recently, dating the beautiful blonde painter **Lindsay McCrum**, who used to go out with artist **John Alexander**. Although the romance seemed to be going well—Raines "lost twenty pounds," reports one friend—the couple has just broken up. So don't expect any rose-tinted editorials in the *Times*.

THE LITTLE LEAGUE GETS TRUMPED



Donald Trump:
Rough on the diamond?

Donald Trump: Lovable soccer dad or tough developer bigfooting all over a Little League baseball field? To West Siders right now, he's both. Trump earned kudos in the community by building a soccer field for local kids while the site, then known as Riverside South, was going through its laborious public-review process. (The field, as expected, gave way to high-rise development last year.) Now Trump is breaking ground on a third high-rise, which he has, not quite uncharacteristically, renamed Trump Place. But this excavation has damaged the West Side Little League's diamond. "The field was in the way of one of the buildings," explains Trump. "We're going to be moving things around so everybody's happy." Last Wednesday, representatives from the Little League and the Parks Department met at the field. Little League president **Michael Orbison** says, "I've been assured by the Parks Department that it will be repaired" in time for the teams' first practices, on April 3. The always enthusiastic Trump promises to build "a much bigger park" on the site. Sky boxes?

ROSS MOVES OUT, GOLD MOVES IN

LOFTY CHANGE: After twenty years, **Ross Bleckner** is ready for a change. He's just put

RIDE 'EM, *PLAYBOY*!

One photo they left out of this month's *Playboy* was of model **Cindy Guyer** festooned in poison oak. Guyer, who typically adorns the covers of supermarket bodice-rippers, was being shot for *Playboy* done up as Lady Godiva when her not-so-trusty steed went wild. "I was wearing nothing but hair," says Guyer, when Crazy Horse "took off." When the angry equine bucked, the female Fabio became airborne, landing in a patch of poison oak. "It was humiliating—I looked hideous, and I couldn't move my neck," says the Playmate, adding that she couldn't work for a month because "no makeup artist would touch me." Guyer holds no grudge against the folks at *Playboy*, who, she claims, whisked her off to the emergency room and have been paying her medical bills since. But a spokesperson for the magazine minimizes the situation, contending that Guyer wasn't injured and there were no bills to pay. Whatever the damage, the company that provided the untame mount may have to pony up some cash—Guyer says she intends to sue.

Cindy Guyer: Rash move

Ross Bleckner: $9 million man?

his home on the market—the six-story loft building that used to house the Mudd Club, which the painter converted to a studio and single residence. All 15,000 square feet, with a landscaped terrace on the roof, can be yours for $9 million. His broker is Coldwell Banker's **Deborah Gimelson**, who knows a thing or two about changing gears herself: Before switching to real estate, Gimelson wrote about art. Bleckner insists he's not moving out of the neighborhood because folks like **Rupert Murdoch** are moving in. "It's not a commentary on any of the changes that are taking place around me," he says with a laugh. "I thought it would be nice to walk to work."

INTENSIVE COUTURE UNIT? **Cynthia Rowley** is prescribing a dose of chic for patients at the Hackensack University Medical Center. For its annual fund-raiser last October, the hospital had asked such design companies as Rowley's, **Jill Stuart**, **Nicole Miller**, **Halston**, and **Anne Klein** to redesign the standard hospital gown. Now the hospital has ordered a full shipment of Rowley's design, and soon patients will be free of that embarrassing slit up the back. "I wanted to make people feel better about themselves," says Rowley, who adds that the medical center is spearheading the effort. "We want to make patients feel terrific about their stay at the hospital," says a hospital spokesperson. At the very least, they'll look terrific.

ALL IN THE GOURMET FAMILY: Clearly **Ruth Reichl** sees nothing wrong with Los Angelenos' reviewing New York restaurants. Now that the departing New York *Times* critic, who was once the Los Angeles *Times'* food editor, is taking over at *Gourmet*, sources say she'll be snatching **Jonathan Gold** away from *L.A. Weekly* to make him the magazine's New York restaurant critic. A transplanted Gold need not worry about being lonely here: His wife, **Laurie Ochoa**, will be *Gourmet*'s new executive editor. Gold will succeed **David Rosengarten**, who's leaving his post because of a potential conflict of interest—he plans to open a restaurant, Rosengarten, with Tavern on the Green's **Warner LeRoy**. Rosengarten says he'll stay on as a contributing editor at *Gourmet*, writing food and travel stories only—nothing about New York or restaurants. "Now that Ruth is coming, maybe this will be the most gracious time to make the change," he says.

ASHMAN'S NEW CREDIT: With movie folk crowding **Noel Ashman**'s Veruka restaurant and lounge, it was perhaps inevitable that he'd try to break into the business himself. The restaurateur is associate producer and story consultant on *Speedway Junkie*, an indie film executive-produced by **Gus Van Sant** that premiered at the Berlin Film Festival. Ashman regrets not having been able to take a walk-on role alongside stars **Daryl Hannah**, **Jesse Bradford**, and **Tiffani-Amber Thiessen**. "I just couldn't get out to Vegas," he says, "which really had me bummed."

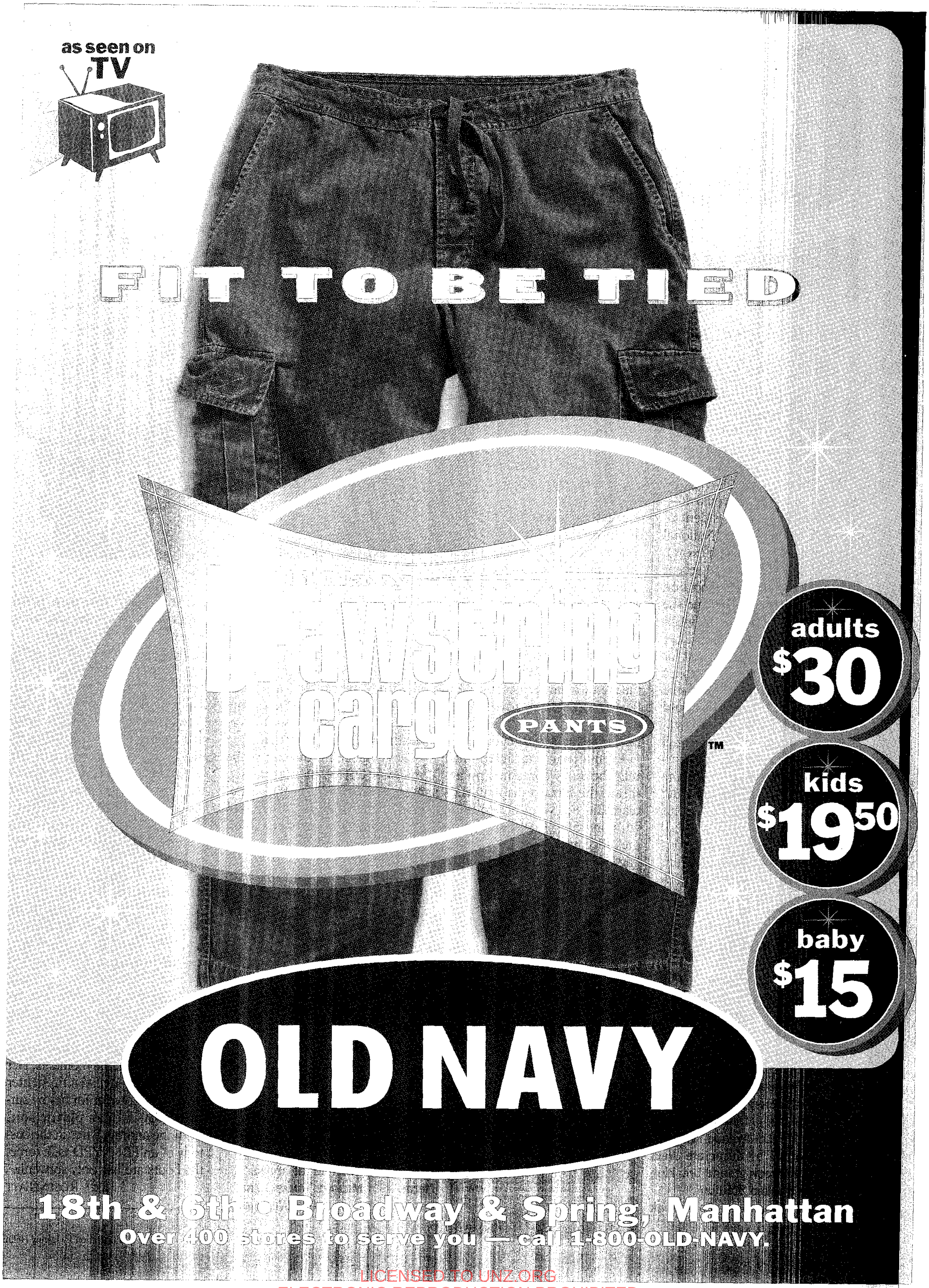
JEAN-JEAN: After finally satisfying his quest to open a restaurant in New York, superchef **Jean-Louis Palladin** has apparently decided one is not enough. Already set to launch Palladin in the Time Hotel, the feisty Frenchman, says a source, will take over Bombay Palace's 52nd Street location to open a place called Jean-Louis. Backing him in the venture are his bosses at the Rio Hotel in Las Vegas, where he runs the Napa restaurant, says the source. "Our intentions are to open a restaurant in New York with Jean-Louis, but that's as far as we can say," says a Rio spokesperson.

Additional reporting by Ian Spiegelman and David Kover.

POLLACK POLISHES UP BIKES AND BILL

Forget about swimming to Cambodia: Director **Sydney Pollack** and financier **Herb Allen** are going to be bicycling through Vietnam later this month, according to a well-informed source. Pollack, for one, will need a break by then. Not only has he been directing *Random Hearts*, he's also been giving "acting lessons" to a buddy, presidential wannabe **Bill Bradley**, according to a West Coast source. Pollack coached Bradley before his keynote speech at the 1992 Democratic convention, and he famously hovered over the then–senatorial candidate before a big L.A. fund-raiser in 1989, checking makeup and helping with the speech. Pollack loyally sent him $1,000 last year, and longtime supporters **Emanuel Azenberg**, **Roger Berlind**, and **Rocco Landesman** are planning a "Broadway for Bradley" fund-raiser this fall. A spokesman for the former Knick–former senator confirmed that Pollack and the candidate "have a friendship, and they talk about things related to Bradley's political career," but he wasn't sure whether the *Tootsie* director had been providing coaching help recently. The candidate himself couldn't be reached—traveling, though not in the basketball sense.

Photographs: top, Ilkka Uimonen/Sygma; bottom, Robin Platzer/Twin Images.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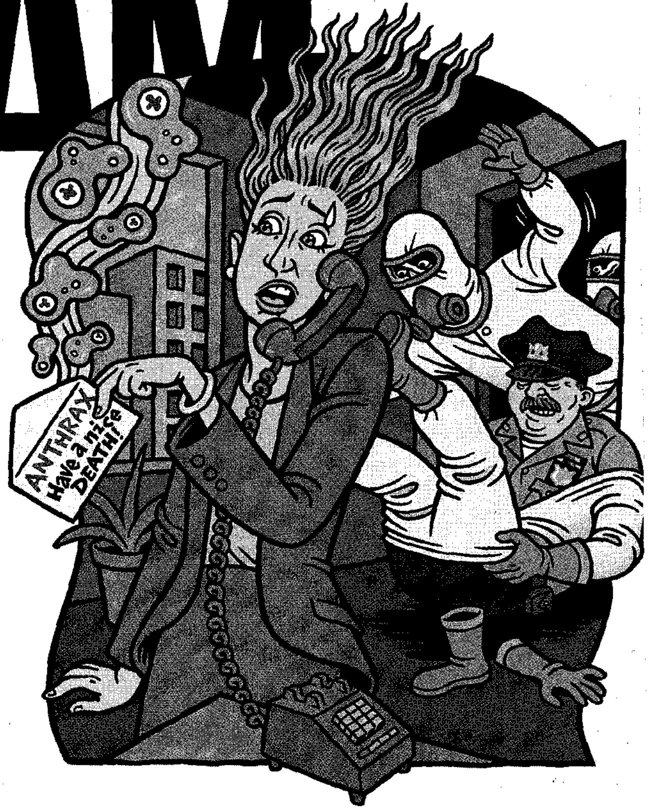

Hazard a Guess

How well does the city deal with an actual bio-terrorism threat?

When Galen Sherwin opened a brown-stained letter on February 22 that read ANTHRAX. HAVE A NICE DEATH, she did what most people would do—she called 911. As president of the city's chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), Sherwin knew about the recent rash of threats against abortion clinics across the country, and she took the letter seriously. So when the 911 operator failed to give her instruction (other than to wait for a call back), she called the police directly. But the cop she spoke with said only that she should wait for a squad car to arrive.

The 911 call only presaged greater chaos. About ten minutes after her first call, she found officers waiting outside; strangely, they invited her to sit in their cruiser, which she did. Anxious, Sherwin soon got out and waited while officials from various agencies, including a hazardous-materials team in full protective gear, arrived and debated who was in charge and what should be done with Sherwin. "They were all ignoring me," she says. "I was sort of like this thing they did not know what to do with."

Finally, a fireman told her to go down to the building's boiler room, strip down, and zip herself into a plastic suit—which came without the headgear the hazardous-materials team was wearing, Sherwin says. She then endured a six-hour wait during which she found it difficult to get a cup of water. "When you're at the mercy of law-enforcement officials, you have to advocate for yourself," she says. "It's hard to do that in a white plastic bunny suit."

Even after it was determined that the letter contained no anthrax, the hazardous-materials team did not want her to leave with anything that had been in the office, including her coat and bag. Shortly before closing the investigation at 7 P.M. they did turn over the items (Sherwin's bag happened to have a change of clothes in it) but not her original clothing. And when it came time for an escort home, a cop wondered aloud if she was wearing any underwear. "It was dehumanizing enough to be in this white suit all day, naked underneath and freezing," she says.

Jerry Hauer, the director of the mayor's Office of Emergency Management, was at the scene. Had Sherwin shown symptoms of contamination, such as respiratory problems, she would have been treated differently, he says. There was, he says, "discussion throughout the incident" between the Fire Department and the police, which might account for the confusion Sherwin says she witnessed.

Lieutenant Sean Crawley, a Police Department spokesperson, says 911 operators are not specifically trained to respond to hazardous-material threats, but notes that calling the precincts directly may or may not be effective, since, as Crawley puts it, the response will "depend on what cop answers the phone, to be honest with you."

"I'm going to look at the fact that the Police Department operators do not have a protocol, because they should have been working on that," Hauer says.

Sherwin, for her part, insists that clear protocols for dealing with such threats are especially crucial now that anti-abortion forces are increasingly "moving in on the clinics themselves and trying, through intimidation and threats, to shut them down."

Her own ordeal, Sherwin adds, was not without its moments. Her shoes were gone, so a firefighter fashioned footwear for her by cutting boots from a plastic suit. With the anthrax letter in the custody of an FBI-NYPD task force, the boots are her only souvenir.

JOEL ROSENBLATT

Digestive Tract

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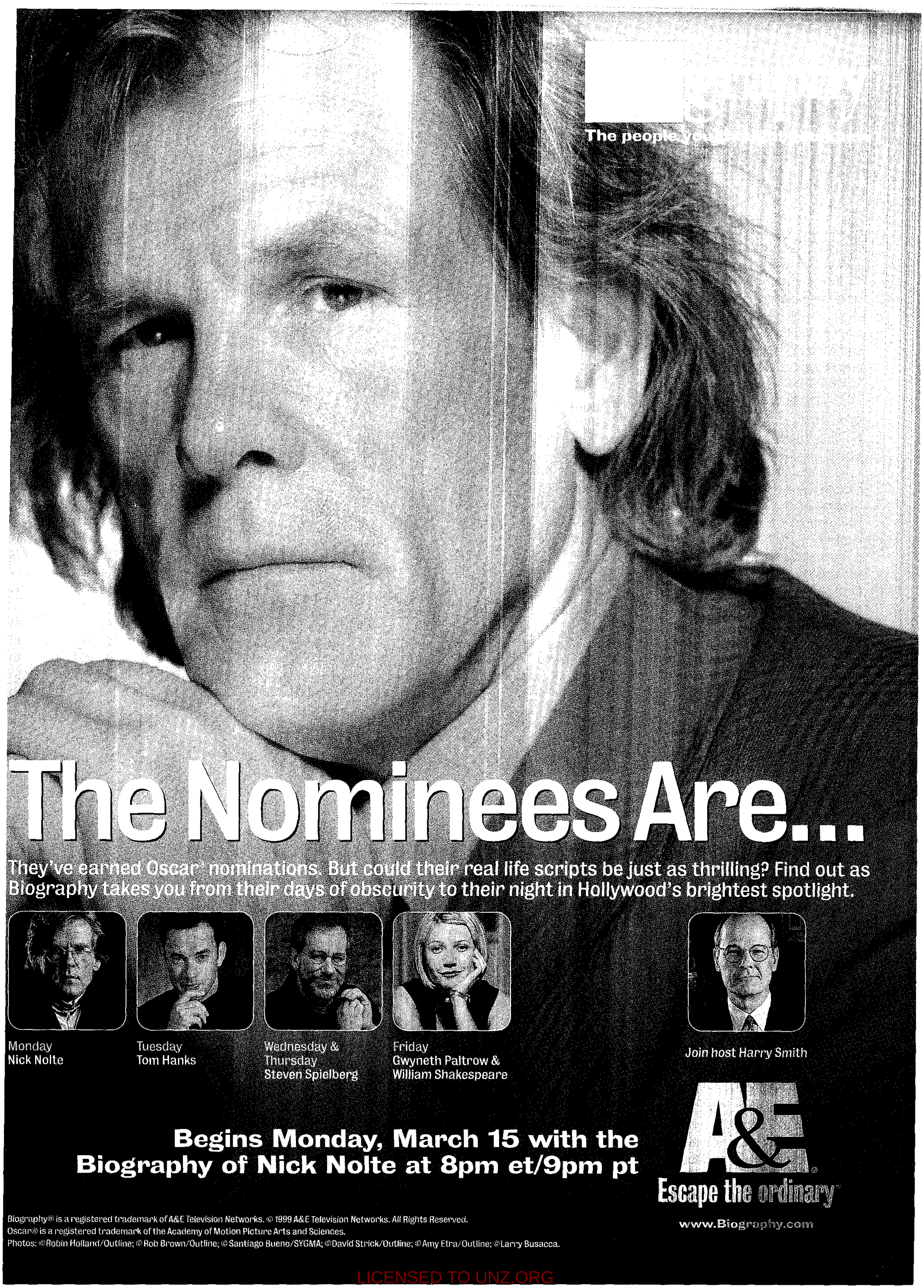
NO-MORE GIULIANI: Powerful sedative for those who wish to sleep out balance of mayor's term.

MICHAEL TOMASKY AND ALEX WILLIAMS

Illustration by Danny Hellm



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Starry Night

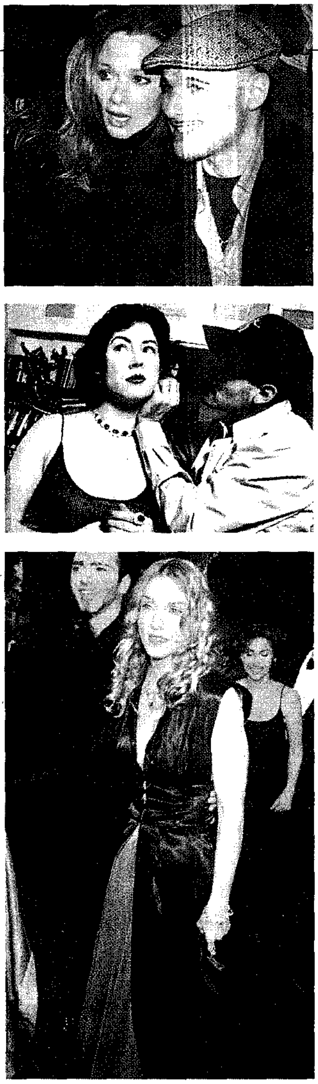
Who's more important at the Oscars—celebrities or their stylists?

It's two weeks until Oscar Night, and the stylists who dress celebrities for the red-carpet extravaganza are buzzing around Los Angeles in a high-octane fury, flipping through look books, watching runway videos, and calling Paris and Milan in search of *the* Academy Awards ensemble. Some, like Vivian Turner, who is dressing Geena Davis, have it easy. "Geena gets the giggles when she really loves something, and then we know," says Turner, speaking via cell phone en route to Harry Winston to select a few million-dollar diamonds for her client. "I want the men to whimper when she walks by," she purrs.

Ever since Phillip Bloch dolled up an exhausting ten clients, including Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith, Sandra Bullock, Salma Hayek, Jennifer Lopez, and Gabriel Byrne, for the Academy Awards two years ago, stylists have achieved increasingly high-profile status. Celebrities know they can't underestimate the power of the perfect look (just ask Uma Thurman, who introduced the world to Prada in 1996) or the unforgettable faux pas (like Demi Moore's bike shorts under a cutaway gown in 1989).

This year's It girl is Jessica Paster, who is dressing Best Actress nominee Cate Blanchett, Kim Basinger, Minnie Driver ("if she goes"), and Sam Jackson ("if he goes"). "The moment the Golden Globes are announced, it starts," says a breathless Paster from her L.A. office. "All you do is look for clothes and have meetings with shoe people, purse people—everybody!" Bloch is dressing only Jim Carrey this year, but that's because he's parlayed his success into more time-consuming gigs like commentator roles on E! and *Entertainment Tonight.* The night of the big event, he'll host the Oscar preshow on CNN and the postshow on ABC.

Some stylists are not so sure their ascent is good for business; they whisper that clients don' want to compete for star status and instead turn to others within their inner circle—often with disastrous results. "They end up in these beautiful gowns with the wrong shoes and too many accessories because their publicists dressed them," says Fati Parsia. Others argue about whether dressing too many stars at once constitutes a conflict of interest when each naturally wants to shine the brightest. Arianne Phillips insists there is less competition than one would think. "Courtney Love introduced me to Madonna," she offers.



Top to bottom, Phillip Bloch escorting Lauren Holly to Badgley Mischka last November; Bloch dressing Jennifer Tilly for the 1998 Oscars; Madonna outfitted by Arianne Phillips, working the red carpet last year.

But hobnobbing with the Hollywood elite is not always a fairy tale come true. "I'll tell you why I didn't do the Academy Awards last year," says Parsia. "I was doing Kim Basinger the year before. We picked a dress from Balenciaga, had it custom-made in Paris and sent over for $17,000, and the night of, Kim decided not to go. And I'm standing there left to deal with it." Sarah Bernard

---

'Oh, Barbara! Your Dignity!'

Lucianne on the Monica Show.

Were she a trifle more sentimental, Lucianne Goldberg would have approached Monica Night with a certain proprietary pride. After all, it was she, as much as anyone, who set the whole soap opera in motion. But an hour before the spectacle is to begin, the literary agent is in a sour mood. "It's a fucking bore!" she growls. "If I want to watch two princesses gossiping, I can stop in at Zabar's."

Goldberg has been summoned to the Rockefeller Center studios of MSNBC's *Hockenberry Show* to deliver a kind of postgame analysis. "Linda Tripp refuses to watch it," she confides. "During the impeachment, the only thing she watched was the Home Shopping Network."

Dressed in a chic black pantsuit and a pearl choker, Goldberg is nonetheless a terrifying presence—a dynamo with the shoulders of an undernourished linebacker and a tongue that chops and dices like an overactive Cuisinart. In NBC's green room, where she is greeted like visiting royalty, she lights up, ignoring the NO SMOKING signs. "They've learned not to fuck with me," she says. "Or I walk right out. When I did Fox, Roger Ailes personally called the Fire Department to come turn off the sprinklers."

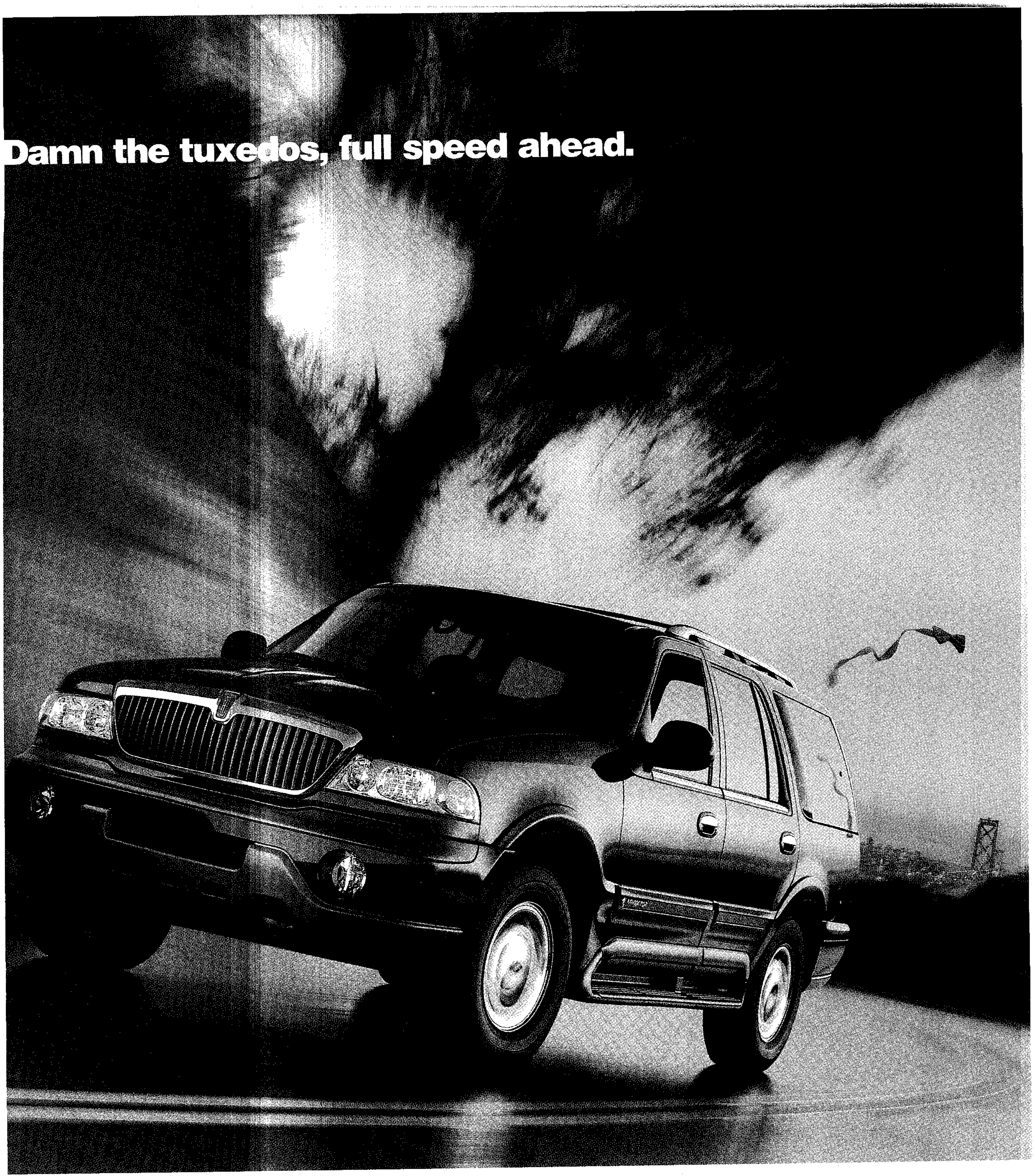
Suddenly, the door opens to reveal Joe Conason, a New York *Observer* editor whom Goldberg once denounced as a "sniveling Clinton toady." Smiling nervously, he takes a seat at a safe distance from his nemesis. He's soon joined by *Newsweek's* Jonathan Alter.

As soon as the show begins, Goldberg cries, "It's worse than I imagined! She's so perky it makes me want to throw up! And what's with all the Vaseline on her teeth? Can we get a little closer to her mouth with the camera, please! They're gonna go down her throat any minute. Maybe we'll get to see her uvula!" Even Conason lets out a tiny laugh when Monica describes baring her thong to the chief executive as a "subtle flirtatious gesture." Goldberg issues a derisive snort. "Maybe I can try that trick with my Jockeys for Her."

When Walters asks Monica to define phone sex, the room erupts into raucous laughter. "Oh, Barbara! Your dignity!" clucks Lucianne. As the viewing wears on, Conason and Alter are shuttled off to the studio. Left alone, Goldberg turns antsy. "What *else* is on?" she asks the producer and begins flipping channels, to his dismay.

By the last saccharine segment, Goldberg is at her wit's end. "How can you stand it?" she groans. "Worse than *Oprah*!" Even Monica's weepy suicide confession leaves her unmoved. "We're in the homestretch, thank God. Here come the tears! It's the money shot!" By the time the producer returns to escort her to the set, she is cranky and spent. "Sometimes I don't know why I bother," she sighs. "But *someone* has to stand up for truth and justice. I guess it's my cross to bear." Maer Roshan

Photographs: from top to bottom, Evan Agostini/Gamma Liaison; Marissa Roth/Retn
Evan Agostini/Gamma Liaison; Deborah Feingold/Outlin



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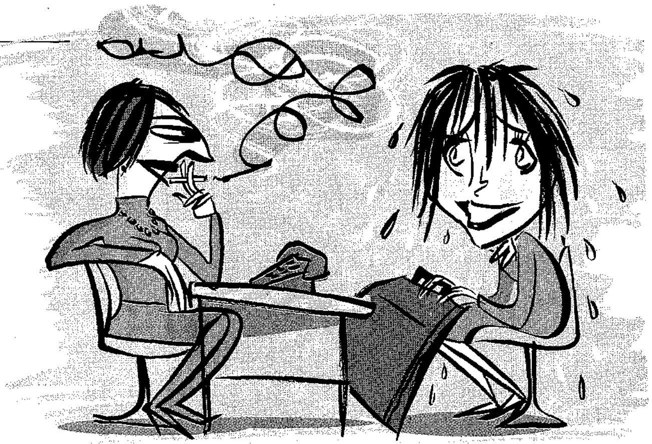
Fashion Victims

Katie Couric, Jessye Norman, Eileen Fisher: Humiliated! Overdressed! Just too trendy!



CINDERELLA ISN'T LOOKING for a prince anymore. She wants a career—and that means she needs a suit more than she needs a ball gown. But one part of the story remains the same: Cinderella still needs her fairy godmother.

On March 13, a gaggle of modern fairy godmothers, chaired by Hillary Clinton and including Lauren Hutton, Jessye Norman, Gloria Steinem, Katie Couric, and Eileen Fisher, will gather at the Waldorf-Astoria to host the Grand (Swinging) Masquerade Ball & Auction for Dress for Success, an outfit that provides business clothes for poor women seeking jobs. In a way, the benefactresses are all Cinderellas themselves—every woman, whatever her wardrobe, has panicked over what to wear to a fateful job rendezvous.

Today host Couric remembers a "humiliating" interview at Grey Advertising. "It was March, it was pouring rain, I had a terrible cold, I couldn't get a cab, and my umbrella had been blown inside-out from the wind," she says. "I had a gray suit on—wanted to fit in at Grey—which was soaking wet, and my mascara had run down to my chin." Her waterlogged shoes squeaked when she walked. "When the woman told me she didn't have anything, I started crying."

When diva Jessye Norman flew from Berlin to Milan for her debut at La Scala, her suitcases went on to Bangkok. The temperature in Italy was in the seventies, and Norman had nothing to wear but a wintry German traveling outfit. She arrived at her very first rehearsal in a heavy woolen dress. "After an hour in a non-air-cooled space, I was perspiring beyond reason," she recalls. "The conductor took this to mean that I was in some profound way anxious. No amount of protest convinced him that it was not a question of anxiety but of my wool dress."

Fashion designer Eileen Fisher advises job-hunting women to "be true to who they are" when they dress for the big face-to-face. She once tried to look "ultra-fashion-forward" for an ill-fated job interview, but felt like she was masquerading as someone else in her loud, trendy ensemble.

Even if a woman chooses the right suit, she's not necessarily i the clear. As *Today* co-host An Curry learned, you can't forget th footwear. She once went to wor in platform shoes, only to fin herself covering a plane crasl "As I climbed over a barbed-wi fence to get to the scene, I rea ized just how unfortunate m clothing choice was," she say ruefully. "My stockings wer ripped, I had blood all over m knees, and the platform shoe were not holding up well at all. Dress for Success would hav suggested a pair of sensible Nan cy Drew pumps instead.

LIESL SCHILLINGE

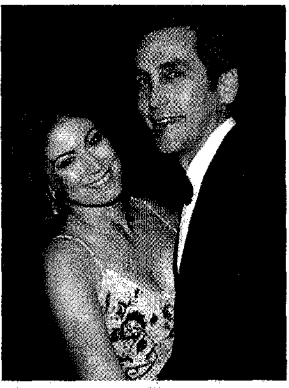
THE SCENE

Metal Head

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

Caroline Hirsch and Andrew Fox at the Children's Hearing Institute benefit honoring furrier Dennis Basso.

John F. Kennedy Jr. at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Hudson News stand in Grand Central Terminal with father-and-son Hudson News owners Robert and James Cohen.



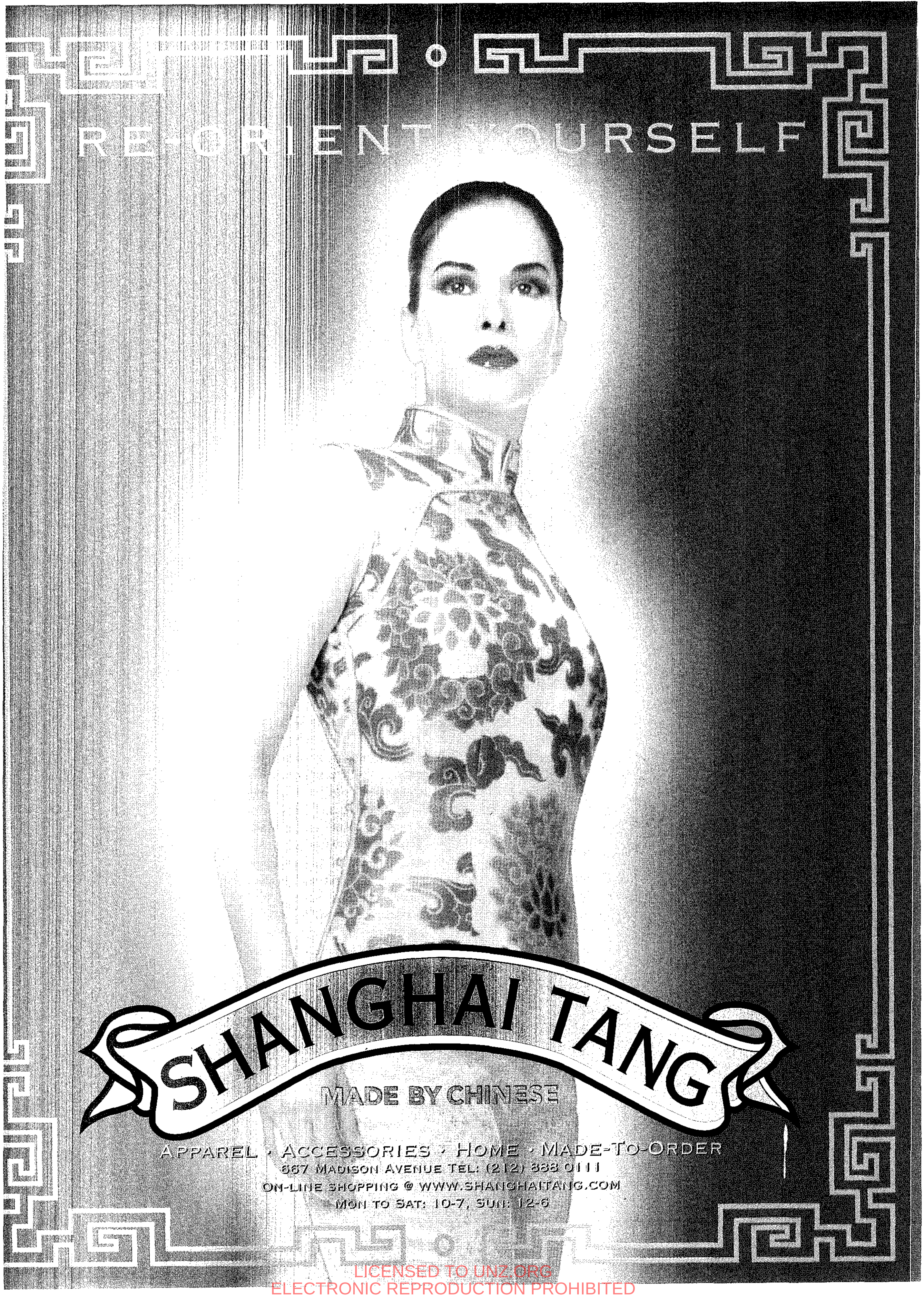
Laura Johnson and Arnold Scaasi at '21' to kick off Literacy Partners' Literacy Week.

Portraitist Sacha Newley, Milly de Cabrol, and Randall Jones at Jones's home for a private party honoring Newley.

Prince Edward with Joanne de Guardiola benefiting the Royal Oak Foundation's U.S. programs at the Equitable Center.

Ryan Phillippe at Elaine's for Miramax's dinner in honor of *Shakespeare in Love* director John Madden.

Illustration by Tom Bach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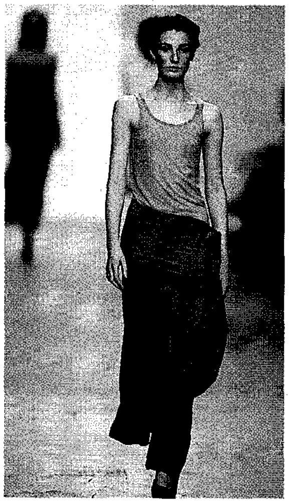
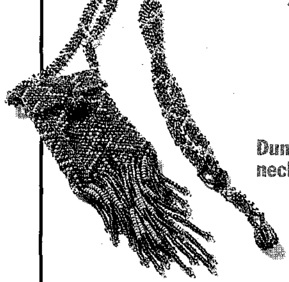
GOTHAMSTYLE

Lambertson Truex's handbag.

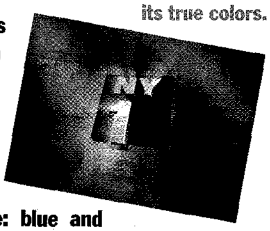

Calvin Klein's new hues.

Puma's tandem shades.

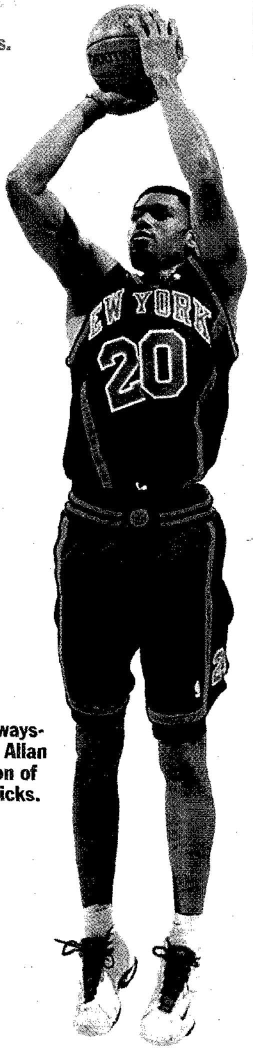

Dunitz & Co.'s neck pouch.

Sunny Delight

Nobody was happy when dreary gray was declared the new black, but when the fashion world rushed a corrective pink into the magazines and onto the runways, a lot of us remained resistant; pink is just a little *too* Prozac-pretty. But rising on the horizon is a color combination so eye-searingly cheery that it's proving weirdly irresistible: blue and orange. Designers like Calvin Klein, Gucci, DKNY, and Sandy Dalal are now using the colors together, as are sportswear mass-marketers Nike, Puma, the Gap, and Nautica. "For me, bold color is the essence of this spring," says Klein. "Especially combining color with color, like shades of orange and blue." Of course, companies like Sunkist, Union 76, and Gulf Oil have long used the complimentary combo, and the Denver Broncos, the Knicks, and the Mets have all made the colors their own. Now the color-wheel opposites are brightening of-the-minute advertising campaigns (Microsoft Network, Levi's, New York 1, Versace), product design (Panasonic and Aiwa portable cassette players), and Web pages (amazon.com, sephora.com). "It's really a symbolic color combination in terms of the millennium," says Leatrice Eiseman, the director of the Pantone Color Institute. "You *have* to look at them, whether you want to or not." Anna Holmes



Cable shows its true colors.



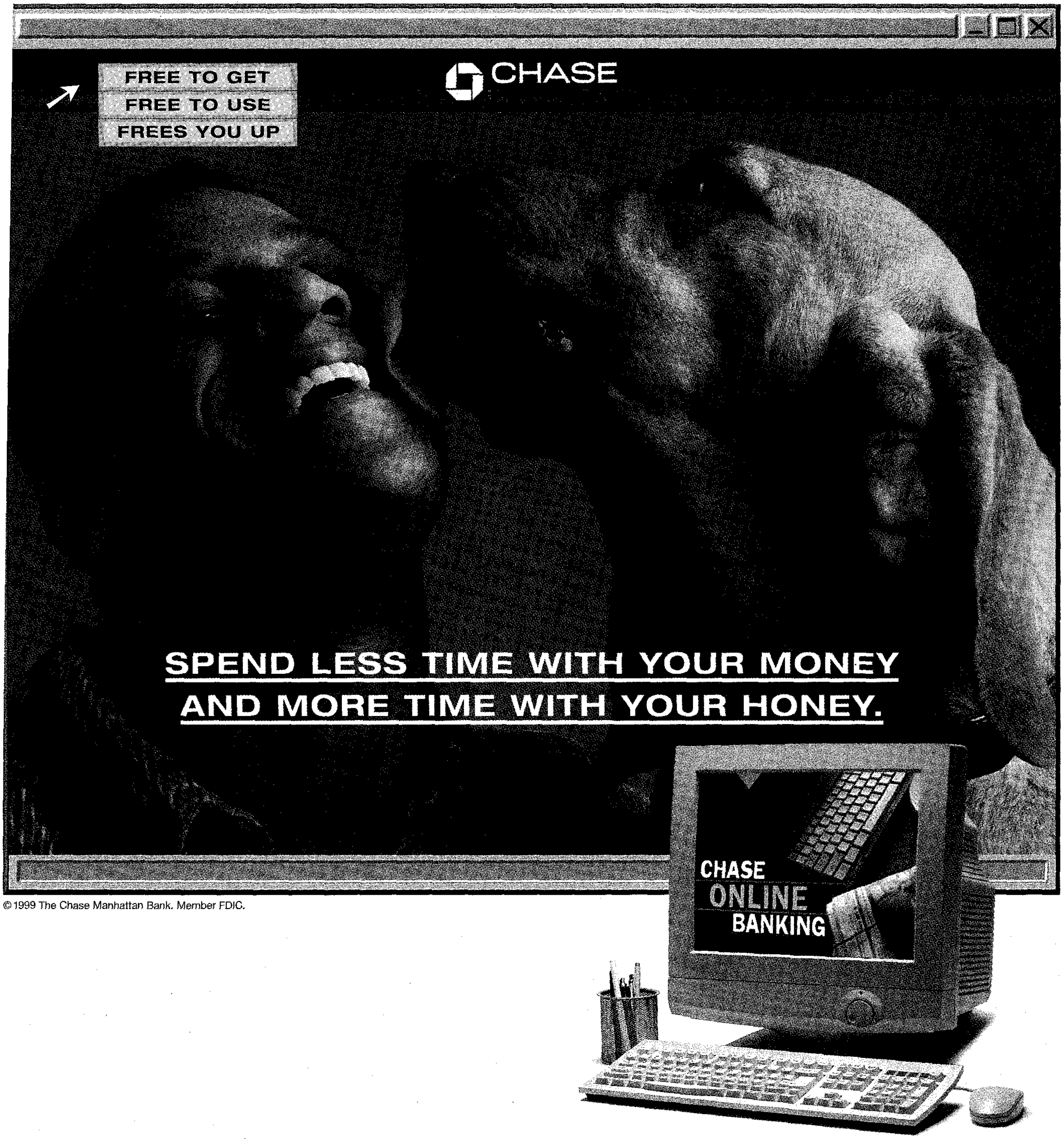
The always-stylish Allan Houston of the Knicks.

Felicity's Keri Russell wears an Armani dress.

Comfy slip-ons from DKNY.

Gucci's checked skirt.

EDITED BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS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MEDIA MICHAEL WOLFF

Dinner-Party Hacks

For those who need to know—and need you to know that they know—there are two A-list options: dinner with Ed or with Hitch. (Well, be careful with that last one.)

THE WRITER EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN often hangs up on people (when I called to discuss this story with him, he hung up on me). Epstein, his intimates attest, is passionate in his friendships and equally passionate when friends disappoint him. Most recently, Christopher Hitchens, who himself was disappointed by Sidney Blumenthal, disappointed Ed Epstein, who, in a sort of metaphorical hanging-up on Hitchens (who the other day reportedly called Sidney Blumenthal's house to apologize for exposing Blumenthal to a perjury charge, only to have Blumenthal's wife hang up on him), circulated an e-mail about how, at a dinner at the Royalton Hotel with Epstein and *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour, among others, Hitchens denied the Holocaust. Hitchens is now threatening to sue his former friend, the author of several seminal works of investigative journalism, whom he calls a "demented liar."

The Sidney Blumenthal–Christopher Hitchens contretemps is most often billed as a dispute about (a) Clinton-era morals and politics or (b) journalistic ethics. It may well involve those things, but it may also be as much about the socializing rituals of the media elite.

It is certainly appropriate that Ed Epstein—one of the first writers whom Tina Brown has signed for her new magazine, *Talk*—has interjected himself into the Blumenthal-Hitchens dispute, because Epstein is the *ne plus ultra* of dinner-party journalists. Indeed, his only real rival as a host is Christopher Hitchens himself.

The social habits of writers are, of course, often used as a kind of shorthand to describe the cultural history of an era (this is at least in part because the writers are usually the ones doing the describing): Paris in the twenties; Bloomsbury; Paris in the fifties; the *Partisan Review* crowd—what Norman Podhoretz in his recently published book *Ex-Friends* calls the Family (with an odd echo of the Manson Family).

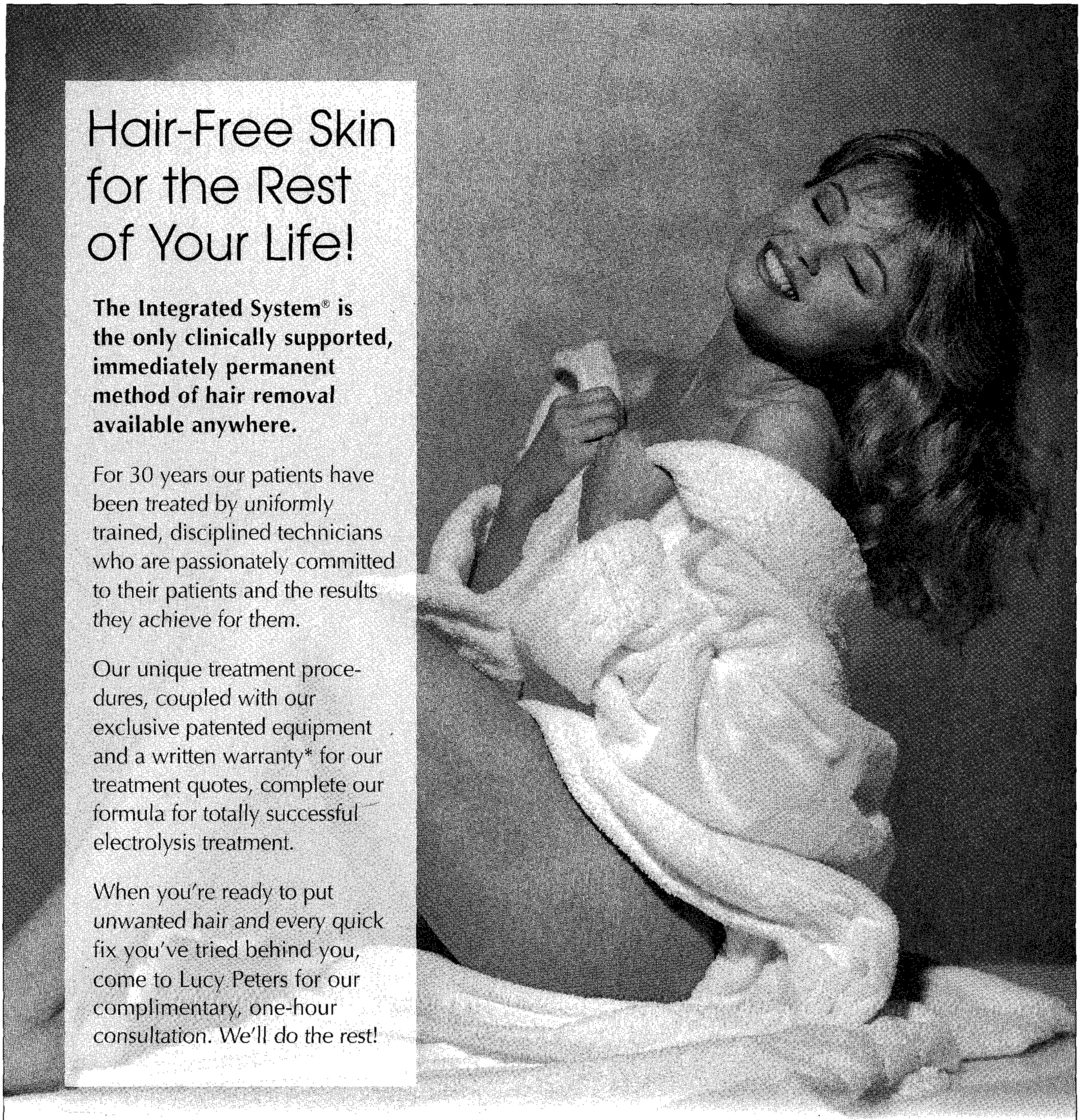
Beginning in the late seventies, a possible next generation of Podhoretz's Family—richer, better-dressed, less political, but intellectuals nonetheless—began to congregate at Ed Epstein's East Side apartment, and later also at Hitchens's gatherings in Washington.

The difference between the older group of intellectuals and those at the Epstein-Hitchens salons is that the new group comprises a much broader media circle (the lowbrow, middlebrow, and highbrow cultures that Podhoretz describes—Podhoretz considered writing for *The New Yorker* to be a form of slumming—having blended into an inclusive media culture). Indeed, the focus of the Epstein-Hitchens generation isn't around this or that intellectual journal but on the culture, or cult, of the media. (Epstein's book *News From Nowhere* was one of the early works of media criticism.) Then, too, the political identities at the heart of Podhoretz's Family—Stalinists, Trotskyites, anti-Communists, and later neocons—have been replaced in the Epstein-Hitchens social order by a different identity: Media Status. To be on the Epstein-Hitchens guest list, you need to be a prominent voice in the media, in a position to influence what is in the media, or a person of enough influence to be covered by the media (or sometimes all three). The Epstein-Hitchens parties, in other words, are "networking events" of a very high order.

"In the literary media world," says a frequent Epstein guest, "you are who you go out with at night."

At any particular point over the past two decades at Epstein's (rent-stabilized) duplex penthouse (one of Epstein's notable accomplishments, says a friend, is the irrigation system he's built on his terrace), you might have seen Katrina vanden Heuvel and Victor Navasky, who run *The Nation* (Navasky has condemned Hitchens for his attack

Illustration by Mark Matcho



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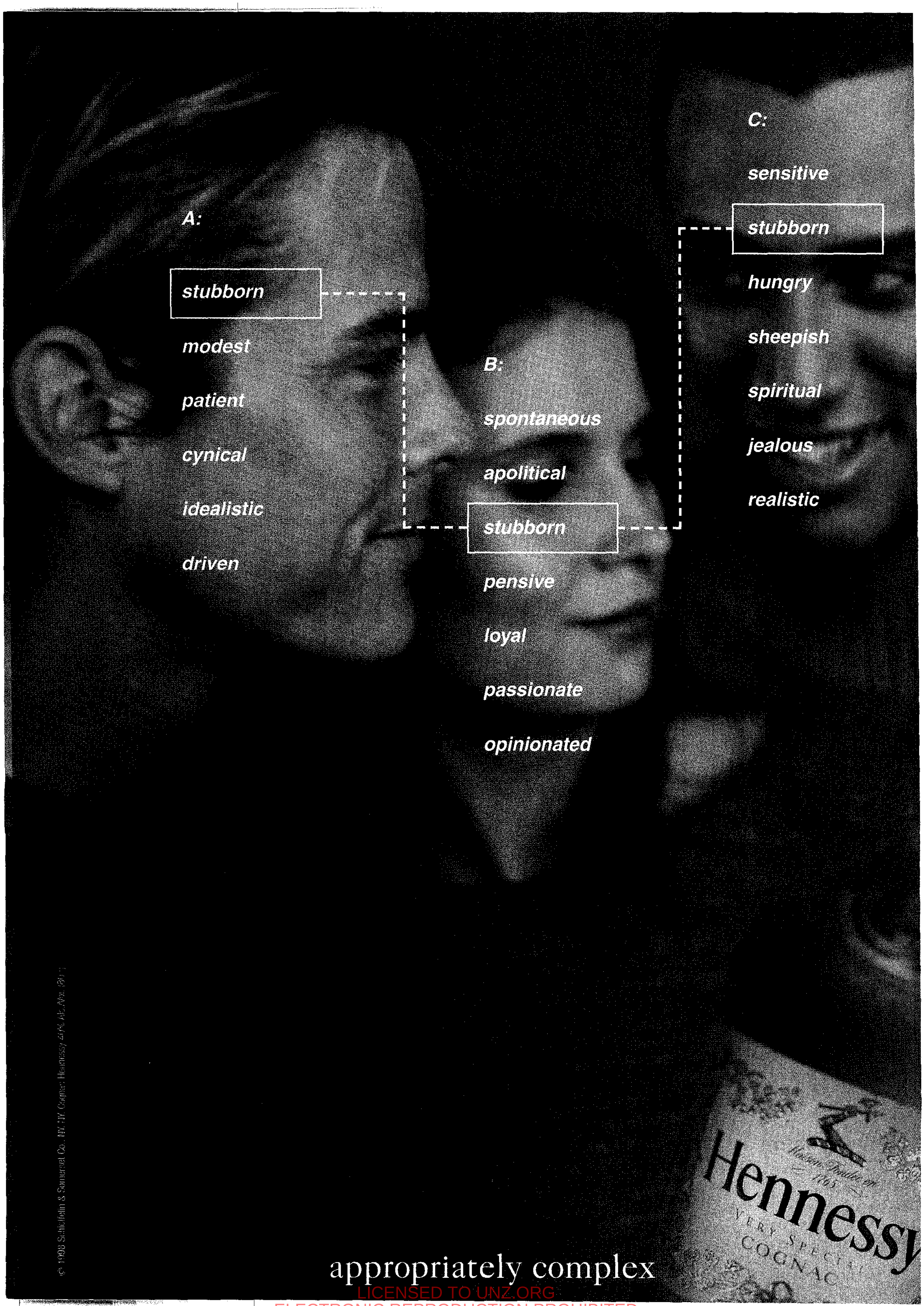
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on Blumenthal and defended Hitchens against Epstein's attack), Christopher Hitchens himself, Hendrik Hertzberg, Michael Kinsley, Alexander Cockburn, Clay Felker, Anthony Haden-Guest, Anna Wintour, Mort Zuckerman, Jeffrey Steingarten, Amanda Burden and Charlie Rose, Tina Brown and Harry Evans, Caroline Kennedy, Renata Adler, Candace Bushnell, various movie stars of the moment, and often, before he died last year, the British billionaire takeover artist Sir Jimmy Goldsmith.

> *"In the* **literary media world,"** *says a frequent guest of Edward Jay Epstein,* **"you are who you go out with at night."**

"Ed's parties are the most dazzling in New York," says a longtime invitee. "It's the only party where the people who are there are there just because they are smart and interesting—or pretty and British."

Many of the same people who attend Epstein's parties get to go to Hitchens's parties too; plus, Hitch might deliver the likes of Salman Rushdie, Martin Amis, Andrew and Leslie Cockburn, Laura D'Andrea Tyson, Sidney Blumenthal, and other London and Washington personalities (there was the memorable evening at Hitchens's house when Woody Harrelson and Alan Greenspan got together).

"There is nothing remotely as interesting to do in Washington as to go to Christopher's house," says the writer Eric Alterman.

It is out of this social combustion—including the potentially volatile conditions upon which someone says something to someone else—that the Blumenthal-Hitchens dispute arises and the Hitchens-Epstein dispute continues.

"It is all very sad," says Alexander Star, the editor of *Lingua Franca,* a journal for the academic and intellectual communities.

But it can also seem very comic too.

"PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS OUGHT TO BE held private," pronounces Victor Navasky—who is a friend to all the parties involved—about Hitchens's snitching on Blumenthal and Epstein's subsequent betrayal of Hitchens. But it is hard not to interpret that as an "I'm shocked, *shocked*" harrumph. What draws people to both the Epstein and the Hitchens gatherings is precisely the fact that private conversations are turned into (more or less) public ones. That is, the gossip—rich, cruel, detailed, accurate—flows at a marvelously uninterrupted rate with Epstein and Hitchens as its medium. They are tapped in, and through them, their guests are, too. They are journalists' journalists. (The best source of information for many media people is other media people.)

"All of Ed's friends know that in terms of gossip, Ed is dangerous," says a longtime friend of Epstein's. "You cannot tell him something and not expect him to tell exactly the person who you intended him not to tell."

It may well be that the thing that motivates Epstein and Hitchens, that causes them to have taken on what is essentially the full-time job of host, is their information need—or dependence.

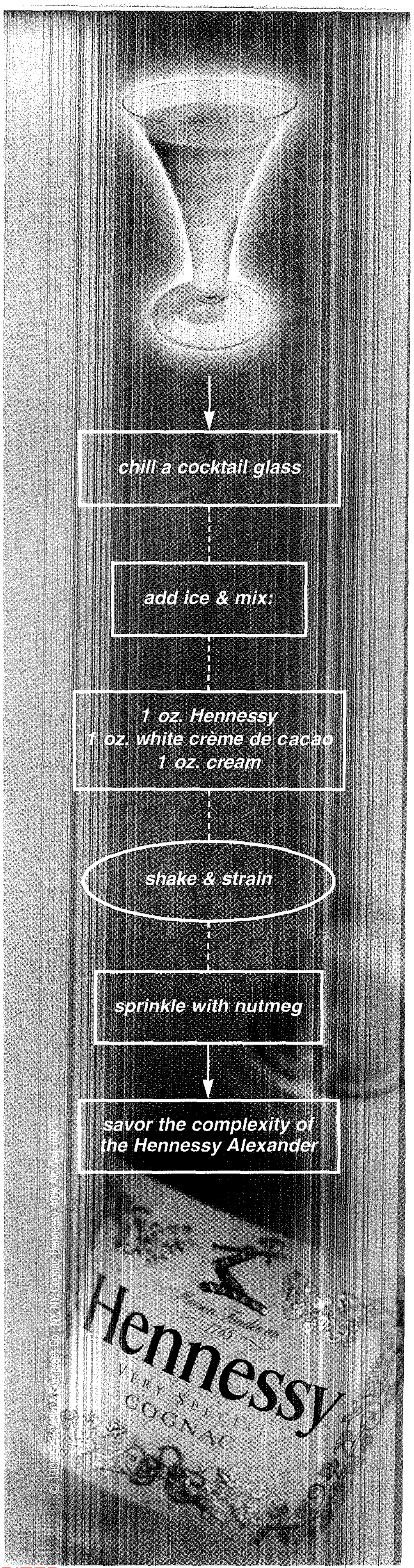
"Ed doesn't do drugs. He does information," says Epstein's friend.

"Christopher has a need to know, and a need to know that you know what he knows," says a London friend of Hitchens's.

And then there is the political comedy. Blumenthal-Hitchens-Epstein have provided the pretext for a half-century to melt away and the leftist cadres to once more reprise the grand passions of Stalin and Trotsky and Senator McCarthy. Navasky, the author of the book *Naming Names,* and *The Nation* have been among the many voices roused from torpor to call Hitchens an "informer." ("The history lesson I'm thinking of here is the one we all supposedly learned in the McCarthy era," writes Katha Pollitt in an open letter to Hitchens in *The Nation.*) Of course, as left-wing history teaches, an informer is probably a fascist, too, which is where Epstein's accusations come in. (Not to mention that Elia Kazan is soon to receive a special Oscar, which has stirred the old stew; and that George Orwell, a Hitchens hero, has recently been shown to have named some Communists, as well.)

And then, adding to the comedy, there is the mirth of the uninvited. The greater media community finds itself with its nose to the window. The producer at *20/20* or the senior editor at *Time* wonders, *Why have I never been invited to Ed's or Hitch's house? Why not me at the Royalton discussing the Holocaust with Anna Wintour? Am I chopped liver?* And so, in-

(continued on page 90)



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Much Ado About Oscar

If 'Shakespeare in Love' beats 'Saving Private Ryan' for the top Oscar on March 21, movie-biz insiders will likely credit—or blame—Miramax's blitzkrieg campaign.

EVEN IN THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES, it's a miracle the insincere lovefest that normally characterizes the Academy Awards doesn't put people off movies altogether. But this year, the glitz of the Oscars on March 21 will be masking one of the most contentious ceremonies in the 72-year history of the Academy.

Nielsen-challenged ABC, which broadcasts the event, is no doubt anticipating protests outside, and perhaps inside, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, over the Lifetime Achievement award to director turned McCarthy-era canary Elia Kazan. Not to mention the threat of pickets by former Miramax employees suing the company for overtime pay. But those are not the only issues that have people in the movie business disturbed about the industry's most important awards. Complaints range from how the introduction of videocassettes has influenced the way nominated films are judged by the Academy's 5,557 voters to what many view as Miramax's over-the-line campaign to boost *Shakespeare in Love*'s come-from-behind chances of taking the Best Picture award from *Saving Private Ryan,* released by DreamWorks and Paramount. The payoff may well be that the Oscar goes to two hours of Elizabethan froth instead of to one of the most gut-wrenching war movies ever made; indeed, by Tuesday of last week, Miramax publicist Andrew Stengel was confidently declaring that his little romantic comedy had become "the front-runner," having earned an amazing thirteen Oscar nominations (compared with *Ryan*'s eleven) and love sonnets from the critics.

Given the millions of dollars at stake, you might assume the film industry's governing body would have developed a system to protect the nomination and voting process from undue influence. Ever since the first Oscar trade ad was placed in 1935 by MGM for *Ah, Wilderness!,* the Academy has attempted to deal with overzealous Oscar lobbying. Identified as overkill have been such efforts as studio-paid phone-bank operators' personally calling voters, and studios' lavishly packaged propaganda. In recent years, Miramax has often been one of the chief culprits. "There's no rule against campaigning," says one top industry executive, "but the Academy doesn't like it thrown in their face."

Dead heat: Miramax's *Shakespeare in Love* (top); DreamWorks/ Paramount's *Saving Private Ryan.*

MIRAMAX HAS CONSISTENTLY PUSHED THE envelope in promoting its films both to the public and within the industry, and this year has been no exception. The Disney-owned "independent" has two Best Picture nominees—*Shakespeare in Love* and *Life Is Beautiful* (which is also a nominee for Best Foreign Language Picture). Miramax pays a fleet of ultraveteran Hollywood publicists (who also happen to be Academy members)—including Warren Cowan, Dick Guttman, Gerry Pam, and Murray Weissman—not to generate press coverage but to schmooze their prominent Academy colleagues. As cronies of the Academy's graying voters, they are paid not just during the five-month Oscar season but nearly year-round—a practice unheard-of elsewhere in the industry. No other studio hires as many outside publicists, particularly publicists well past retirement age. Since December, Cowan has arranged a series of odd-couple dinners, underwritten by Miramax, for Roberto Benigni, the director and star of *Life Is Beautiful.* Suddenly, there was Benigni dining with Kirk Douglas. Benigni and Jack Lemmon. Benigni and Elizabeth Taylor—all of them Cowan's clients and influential Academy members.

"We are not in any way in the vote-buying business," says Miramax L.A. president Mark Gill, "but we are very assertive about publicity and promotion for our movies year-round, including during the Academy season."

Last month in New York—after the Oscar nominations were announced (a time when every film company in Hollywood watches its Academy *p*'s and *q*'s)—*Über*flack Bobby Zarem hosted a "welcome to America" party at Elaine's for *Shakespeare* director John Madden that was paid for by Miramax. Among the partygoers that night were at least three Academy members: director Sidney Lumet, screenwriter-director Jay Presson Allen, and screenwriter David Newman. The party would appear to violate a 1997 Academy rule that deemed it improper for studios to host receptions or dinners for Oscar nominees to which Academy members are invited. Miramax co-

Photographs: top to bottom, Laurie Sparham/Miramax Films; Photofest founder Harvey Weinstein maintains that the party was not a violation of the rules because it was not specifically aimed at Academy voters. "I'm sorry there were three Academy members present," says Weinstein, "but it was a press event, and you have to have celebrities at a press event to get the press there."

Academy executive-administrator Ric Robertson says the rules were developed to "address broad approaches to the membership," conceding that the Miramax party was "a gray area." But he also confirms that the Academy received a complaint about the Elaine's event.

WHEN *SAVING PRIVATE RYAN* WAS RELEASED last summer and became an instant critical and audience success, it was hard to find anyone with anything less than stellar to say about Steven Spielberg's war baby. But journalists and critics on both coasts report that they were recipients of negative Miramax spin, including comments from Weinstein himself, who opined to at least one major critic that *Ryan* "peaks in the first twenty minutes" and "wouldn't hold up in December."

Weinstein denies ever having criticized the Spielberg film. "I would never stoop to that level," he told *New York*. "I would have to betray my own feelings about *Private Ryan*, which I adored." Indeed, last week Mark Gill told me Harvey had "instructed all of us to affirm only our positive attributes"—i.e., not to diss *Ryan*. But that same day, Tony Angellotti, a freelance publicist working exclusively for Miramax, phoned one of Hollywood's most prominent reporters and, during an offer to give him "a little guidance when you write your Oscar story," began "totally trashing *Saving Private Ryan*," this journalist told me, adding, "I couldn't get off the phone fast enough." Angellotti calls that account "a lie," though he adds, "My job is to analyze, and if I said anything negative about *Private Ryan* or any other film, it was in the context of what someone else said."

"Miramax for some reason thinks that because they are media darlings they're above scrutiny," says a competitor, noting that the major studios increasingly worry about campaign backlash. "We wouldn't get away with this stuff for two minutes."

THEN THERE IS THE UBIQUITY OF MIRAMAX'S advertising for its Oscar nominees, especially *Shakespeare*. True independents might spend up to $250,000 on an Oscar campaign; the majors, $2 million. Miramax is estimated by competitors to have spent at least $5 million on its campaign for *Shakespeare*. But Miramax marketing executive Marcy Granada points out that, unlike *Private Ryan*, which did most of its business last summer and fall, *Shakespeare* is only now in wide release; that means advertising in newspapers and television to support the box office that may be confused with advertising to win Academy votes, which she says is comparable with *Private Ryan*'s. *Variety* publisher Gerry Byrne says that as far as trade advertising goes, "if you isolate *Saving Private Ryan* and *Shakespeare in Love*, I'd say it's a spending horse race." Still, it's the studio-level spending by the so-called indie that gives Miramax its bigfoot reputation in the industry.

MIRAMAX ISN'T TO BLAME FOR WHAT MAY be the biggest scandal of the Oscars, and one affecting the *Shakespeare*–vs.–*Private Ryan* race at least as much as any platoon of publicists: that the Academy has done nothing to stop voters from judging Oscar-worthiness almost exclusively on the basis of videocassettes instead of seeing movies in theaters. Indeed, it encourages the practice.

Videocassettes were introduced to level the playing field between the major studios, which could afford cushy and ample screenings, and the independents, which could not. The result was a dramatic shift in the nominations away from mainstream blockbusters to low-budget films like *Tom and Viv* and *Breaking the Waves*. But too many Oscar voters don't see movies on the silver screen; I know some Academy members who haven't set foot in a movie theater all year. Yet *Saving Private Ryan* is a big-screen epic if ever there was one, while *Shakespeare in Love* is as comfortable on the small screen as Gwyneth Paltrow was in Joseph Fiennes's cramped bed.

And having the tape doesn't guarantee that a film will be watched at all. Some voters have confided to me that they have no intention of viewing *American History X* to judge Best Actor nominee Edward Norton's performance because they don't want to be subjected to the movie's violence (that aversion could also influence voters' willingness to look at *Ryan*). And they admit that they didn't screen all of the 60 or more cassettes that began arriving from film companies in December.

All of this demonstrates the inability—or unwillingness—of the Academy to really monitor the industry's most important event. "We don't want to be Big Brother," Ric Robertson states emphatically. Instead, the pictures may still be big; it's just Oscar that got small. ■

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Howard Rubenstein's Life in Conflic

You can find him just offstage during many of New York's most vicious tabloid battles, and whispering in the ears of mayors and megadevelopers. Howard Rubenstein has amassed as much power as a P.R. man can have. But power in the service of what? By Michael Gross

You're Patricia Duff. You're divorcing Ronald O. Perelman and it's taking longer than your marriage. And now, you wake up on November 15 to this in a *Daily News* gossip column: "A court-appointed psychiatrist issued a report last week that is more favorable to Perelman than to Duff." The report was supposed to be confidential. You're mortified and angry; you fight back. ■ Three weeks later, your lawyers win a motion to open your child-custody trial to the public. The next day, Perelman's lawyer raises the stakes, telling the New York *Post* that the report deems you "histrionic, paranoid and narcissistic." The thing that really burns you up about the ensuing mudslinging match is that whenever the subject of who slung first is raised, you've taken the blame, even though one of your lawyers insists, "Perelman turned the guns on us." ■ Perelman's chief hired gun, Howard J. Rubenstein, 67, eminence of public relations, lawyer, political adviser, information broker, damage controller, and crisis manager for the wealthy and well-known, gives your advisers conniptions. "I'd call it more damage than damage control," says one. Another calls him an "evil, duplicitous samurai." Says your spokesman, Jim Haggerty, a lawyer and P.R. man just like Rubenstein, "You see enough leaks and enough smears and you see a pattern develop, a litigation strategy. And in this case, the P.R. strategy—the smears and distortions and attacks—has been so integral to the legal strategy, it's hard to tell where one ends and the other begins." ■ Both Perelman and Rubenstein adamantly deny any role in your image disaster. And Mitchell Fink, who broke the story of the psychiatric report, says the leak didn't come from Rubenstein. Still, says Haggerty: "I believe Howard Rubenstein is an extraordinarily skilled publicist. It takes an extraordinarily skilled publicist to operate at this level. Connect the dots." ■ Finally, late in January, the storm of mud abates, as another scandal knocks you off page one of the *Post;* Michael Schulhof, the former head of Sony, is being charged in a lawsuit by a later employer with putting jaunts to sex clubs on his expense account. Reporters at other papers are tipped to the story, too. "Normally, lawsuits don't come with a press release," chuckles one, who

Photograph by Nigel Parry/CPi

adds that the suit's nastiest charges were highlighted for him by the official spokesman for the plaintiff.

You guessed who that is, right?

WELCOME TO THE GRAY zone inhabited by Howard Rubenstein. Rubenstein has spent his entire professional life operating in the places where contentious constituencies—money and politics, Jews and blacks, Republicans and Democrats, labor and management, celebrity and the press—butt up against each other. In the process, he's become New York's last old-style power broker and a celebrity himself; he pops up in the papers almost as often as his famous clients. In recent weeks, when his name has been in the tabloids alongside Perelman and Duff; the Yankees and the Nets; Nederlander, Sklar, and Seinfeld; and Naomi Campbell, it's seemed Rubenstein is everywhere.

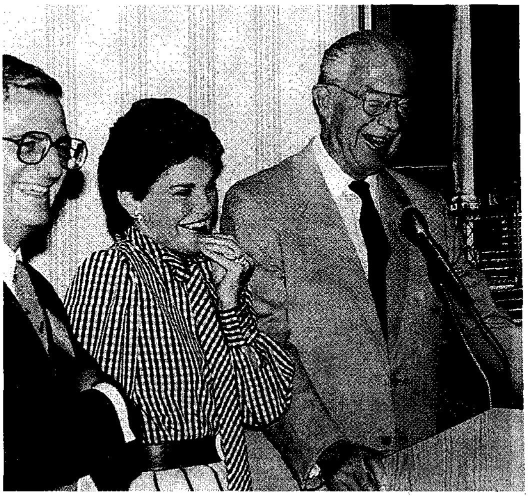
He is a small man with a large office with Hudson River views. Bespectacled, a little jowly, nebbishy despite his tightly controlled short hair and dark pinstriped suit, he is unassuming, eager to be liked, and house-proud as he takes me on an office tour. Every wall of his floor high above Sixth Avenue is an ego wall, filled with photographs of the proprietor, Zelig-like, with all the greats—and not-so-greats—of his age.

Appearances are everything in the P.R. trade, and Rubenstein appears an exemplar of carefully cultivated civic virtue. Yet anyone familiar with his client list knows that he is just as conversant with civil villainy. That list boasts more subjects of controversy—tycoons like George Steinbrenner, Ronald O. Perelman, Donald Trump, and Rupert Murdoch; divas Naomi Campbell and Leona "Queen of Mean" Helmsley; companies in crisis like Long-Term Capital Management and Waste Management, Inc.; bite boys Mike Tyson and Marv Albert—than fill "Page Six" on a good day (and oh, by the way, Rubenstein also represents the New York *Post*).

Rubenstein's unique reputation as a cultural and political go-between took decades of cultivation. And he has made some very deft moves to sustain it, but none more telling than his switch from dedicated operative for the city's Democratic party to proponent of the ideology of self-interest. He currently supports and raises money for both Rudolph Giuliani and Al Gore, a political position that can truly be said to run the gamut. With such ecumenical political clout and his crazy quilt of clients, Rubenstein can claim to be the key gatekeeper to today's access culture, whoever happens to be in power. "Howard's the consummate survivor," says a City Hall observer. "He's very wily." A pause. "But he's devoid of any principles."

Indeed, Rubenstein has been involved in some singularly vicious tabloid battles. In sports, he is renowned for carrying out the orders of Steinbrenner, who first hired the P.R. man in 1988 during his war against star hitter Dave Winfield. "The Yankees' owner vengefully slimed" Winfield, wrote Tony Kornheiser of the Washington *Post* at the time; it was charged that the slugger had given Robin Givens's mother venereal disease, and that his charitable foundation was in disarray. "It was 'Destroy Winfield,' " confirms someone privy to Rubenstein's first conversations with Steinbrenner. "I was with him way before that time," Rubenstein says. "He didn't hire me for that reason."

Rubenstein's hand can be seen in many other conflicts that have enlivened the city in recent years—often on both sides. Though he's a mainstream Jewish leader and longtime adviser to many Hasidic groups, he also represents a radio-station group that has a history of anti-Semitic broadcasts. Though he's known for representing unions, he took the side of the Harvard Club against its striking waiters and busboys. His firm simultaneously represented the Tobacco Institute and a cancer hospital, Leona Helmsley and Donald Trump when they were at each other's throats, and a number of competing educational institutions, including N.Y.U., a longtime account that let him go in a reorganization that happened just after his signing Columbia University as a client.



"Howard's the consummate survivor," sa

him for years. "He's very wily. But he

He's also been accused of raising money for elected officials while at the same time working as a lobbyist for clients who appear before them. But he preempted that criticism by announcing his decision to stop fund-raising at a very public hearing about lobbying elected officials in 1988 where he and clients like the Bernstein brothers (famously the fronts for Ferdinand Marcos) were asked to testify. "We fixed upon Rubenstein as someone with incredible conflicts of interest," says lead lawyer Richard Emery, who came away admiring the P.R. man. But his recent return to fund-raising gives Emery pause. "If that's true, you've got a good story," he says.

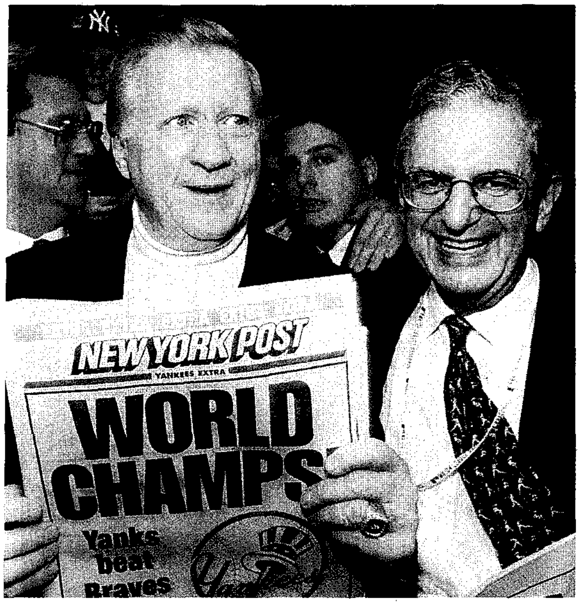
It is true: The New York City Campaign Finance Board reports that in 1997, Rubenstein raised money for Giuliani from 24 contributors, including clients Donald Trump, Daniel Tishman, Raoul Felder, and a number of development companies. Rubenstein says that his lobbying is minimal. But City Council–member Kathryn Freed says, "He can still get things done; it's just not as blatant as it used to be."

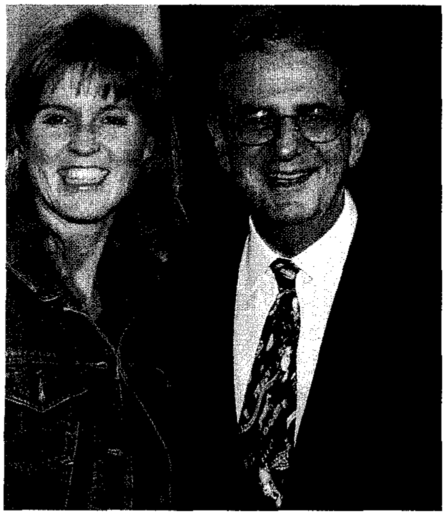
All of which explains why one competitor has had a field day wisecracking about Rubenstein's modus operandi. John Scanlon, the burly, bearded flack who represented Ivana Trump in her divorce from Rubenstein client Donald, has said Rubenstein "has more conflicts than downtown Beirut," once described him as "the greatest carrier of water on both shoulders since Rebecca at the well," and has been known to joke that Rubenstein's doctor has given him "an ethical bypass."

FOR EVERY OPINION IN RUBENSTEIN'S NEW York, there is an equal and opposite opinion. "He's a first-class citizen of the city," says Lew Rudin. "He's got a very high level of credibility,” says Donald Trump. Rupert Murdoch calls him “a friend and a useful adviser.”

Sarah, Duchess of York, calls from England to tell me that initially, Rubenstein refused to even see her, let alone represent her. But when her literary agent, Marvin Josephson, tricked Rubenstein into meeting her, he came around. “Poor man,” she says, “he represents Murdoch. Why on earth would he want to represent me? Like everyone else, he believed my press.” Besides burnishing her image and arranging her endorsement deal with another of his clients, Weight Watchers, Rubenstein brokered a détente with Murdoch. “The thing about Howard is, immediately people listen when you mention his name,” Sarah says. “I like to be taken seriously. Howard has taken me seriously. He’s like my uncle. My samurai uncle.”

H.R. Highness **Clockwise from left, Rubenstein with Harry and Leona Helmsley in the early eighties; with George Steinbrenner in 1996; with the Duchess of York in 1998; and with Donald Trump in 1988.**





Rubenstein does pro bono work for many civic and charitable causes. “He’s been very generous financially, and his advice is very good,” says District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, who was co-chairman of the Holocaust Museum with Rubenstein. “You can call him any time, day or night, and we don’t pay him anything.” Adds Dennis Walcott, president of the New York Urban League, “We all need brokers in our lives. He is able to put folks together and resolve issues.”

Reporters and editors admire Rubenstein, too. Or at least, they’re willing to take his calls. His clients “will probably get a hearing,” says Joyce Purnick, Metro editor of the New York *Times*. “I’ll listen. Will that affect our coverage? Hard to say. It shouldn’t. But in a city this size, a Rubenstein can’t hurt.”

“He’s never lied to me,” adds the muckraking New York *Post* columnist Jack Newfield. “I call him EMS. Somebody’s bleeding to death and Howard gets him to the hospital before we can kill him off. I don’t always approve, but that’s what P.R. people do. So I came to respect him and discovered I could separate him from his unspeakable clients.”

City Hall observer who’s known
void of any principles.”

Jack Rosenthal, the former editor of the *Times* editorial page, recalls how Rubenstein brokered a lively and heated breakfast meeting where the newspaper’s editorial board and John Cardinal O’Connor aired their views on the subject of abortion. “No minds were changed, but both sides profited, a certain amount of good will was fostered, and I credit Howard with creating that climate,” Rosenthal says.

After Rubenstein reached out to Mayor Giuliani and “made a great effort to work with” him, says Cristyne Lategano, his closest aide, even she became a fan. So, I ask, do his civic virtues outweigh his political vices for the mayor? “You can say that, sure,” Lategano says. “It’s simple: If you’re nice, we’re nice. You can’t help but be friendly with the guy. If you hold grudges in this town, you won’t get very far. ”

IT’S DECEMBER AND HOWARD RUBENSTEIN, master P.R. man, is on the telephone representing his best client—himself—by trying to stop a story, the very one you are reading. “People have told me you’ve said you’re going to get me,” he tells me. “I’d be upset if I thought you’d beat me up.”

A few days earlier, he’d been castigated in the *Daily News* for leaking damaging and exaggerated gossip about the ailing New York Yankee Darryl Strawberry on team owner Steinbrenner’s behalf. But we’ll get back to that. “Interview around me, and then I’ll give you an interview,” he says abruptly. “Will you tell me who you interview?”

I’d written about Rubenstein clients before and couldn’t help but be aware of the flack’s presence over my shoulder. This time, that process begins with our second phone call, when he offers me the first of several lists of people he thinks I ought to talk to. This one includes two top editors of the New York *Times*, the owner of the *Daily News*, the New York *Post*’s editor, Cardinal O’Connor, former mayor Beame, former governor Cuomo, and the police commissioner. And tucked in the middle is the name of a principal shareholder of the company that owns *New York* Magazine. “He sponsored me for my country club,” Rubenstein says quietly.

For the next two months I hear from him often by phone and fax and, as the reporting proceeds, almost daily, usually first thing in the morning (he’s notorious for starting his day at 4 A.M.). He relentlessly flatters and subtly directs and continually stresses three themes—his integrity, his philanthropy, and his highly placed friends. And he’s always letting me know who’s called after talking to me. “If somebody says a negative, do you use a positive too?” he worries. “I worked 45 years on my reputation, and I have a good reputation, and a reputation is fragile.”

IN THE MARBLE LOBBY OF RUBENSTEIN’S OFFICE sits a half-size statue of a newspaperman on a stool behind an old Royal typewriter next to a hat rack with a battered fedora. The statue is a tribute to Sam Rubenstein, Howard’s father. It commemorates his days as a reporter at the *Herald Tribune*.

Sam Rubenstein worked in the Brooklyn cop shack, a warren of offices across the street from Police Headquarters, calling in crime stories to the paper’s rewrite desk in Manhattan—his son will rhapsodize about Sam’s deathbed injunction not to mourn him because he’d covered 5,000 fires. But Sam Rubenstein also had a sideline—the

P.R. business he ran out of his hatband. Back in the day, it was an accepted bit of business for underpaid reporters to moonlight in plugola.

Rubenstein guards his father's reputation as fiercely as he does his own. During two days of interviews, the only time he became angry was when I brought up a charge Jimmy Breslin once made in a column suggesting that Sam Rubenstein was fluffing for a Brooklyn district attorney he should have been covering objectively. Sam Rubenstein also engaged in less controversial flackery for a local restaurant, community groups, and a number of pols from Brooklyn's Democratic machine. "He knew everyone," Howard says, still impressed but also defensive. "You ask any City Hall reporter, they'll know all the public officials. That was usual. That was normal."

Whatever Sam was or wasn't doing, it wasn't paying his son's bills. Howard had to work his way through college. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, "Phi Beta Kappa, third in my class," he says, he'd gone on to Harvard Law—the next step in his mother's master plan for him—but discovered within weeks that he hated conflict, which made pursuing the law a problem. So he called his father to say he wanted to drop out and return to Bensonhurst. "I was a failure, a mess," he admits. "And my father took me under his wing."

The Harvard dropout needed a job. He had a talent for art, so he started painting and hand-lettering testimonial plaques, the kind that a union might give to a retiring official. And that's when Sam stepped in and said, "Look, I can help get you an account." In fall 1953, he began introducing his son to his friends. "Howard started with a great credit," says former governor Hugh Carey. "Everybody loved his dad."

Sam gave Howard a crash course in publicity. Then "he introduced me to Raoul Felder's mother at the Menorah Home and Hospital for the Aged," Rubenstein says. "Raoul Felder, he's a client of mine. She paid me $100 a month to write some speeches. I called my dad and said, 'How do you write a speech?' Then without telling me, I'm pretty sure he called every friend he ever had, and he said, 'My son will send you a press release; would you treat it kindly?' I said, 'Oh my God, what an easy business.' "

When his mother refused to make believe she was his receptionist, Howard moved his office from her kitchen table to the corner of his father's cop-shack desk. When other reporters complained that his amateurish typing made too much noise, he rented a tiny office of his own. One of his first clients was Morris Morgenstern, his landlord. Wealthy, generous, and a publicity hound, he'd only managed to get his name into Yiddish newspapers. Rubenstein created the Salute to Freedom Award for him to give out. Morgenstern (and Rubenstein) met Herbert Hoover, Douglas MacArthur, John F. Kennedy, Harry Truman, and Eleanor Roosevelt in the process.

Political and institutional clients followed—hospitals, schools, municipal unions, Brooklyn Democratic Party chairman Stanley Steingut, and several elected officials. They were the key to Rubenstein's rise. The Brooklyn party was a feisty anachronism—after Manhattan's Tammany Hall patronage machine was dismantled, the borough became an organization stronghold for the insurgent party while the liberal Republican, John Lindsay, was mayor. And Rubenstein "was the only Democratic press agent in town!" he exults. "I met everybody—all the assemblymen, all the senators. I went to the meeting of the five county leaders."

Rubenstein also handled press for Brownsville's Monroe Democratic Club, which ran a baseball league for underprivileged kids. One night, while he was working on a press release for the league, Rubenstein found himself face to face with a tiny man in an unseasonable dark suit. "Stanley Steingut sent me," said Abe Beame, the city's budget director and another friend of Howard's dad. "How much is a baseball glove?" Steingut wanted a baseball league for *his* political club, too. From that meeting grew a friendship that has lasted 40 years.

Public-relations man John Scanlon h
carrier of water on both shoulders sin

Political science **Clockwise from top, Rubenstein with Eleanor Roosevelt in 1956; with President Bush and Senator D'Amato in 1990; with Robert Kennedy in the early sixties; and with Vice-President Gore in 1996.**

Howard was still hedging his bets; at his father's urging, he enrolled in St. John's Law School at night, graduating in 1959 near the top of his class. "I wasn't sure I would succeed as a press agent," he says. "The attitude was, if you're a press agent, you're lower than any professional in town."

He also had a new family to support. He'd married Amy Forman, whose father owns a factory, real estate, and Peter Luger's Steak House, and at his insistence made a brief, last stab at lawyering as an assistant counsel for the House Judiciary Committee. Then he finally committed himself to full-time flackery, and moved his office into the landmark Woolworth Building in downtown Manhattan. "I moved for image. Nothing else," he says. "I was a nonentity."

HE WOULDN'T BE FOR LONG. IN the sixties, he added rea estate to his portfolio. Rubenstein's father had also introduced him to Bunny Lindenbaum, a politically connected Brooklyn real-estate lawyer, who in turn brought Rubenstein his first developer client, an outer-borough builder named Fred Trump, and then introduced him to Rex Tompkins, head of the Real Estate Board of New York. It was the mid-sixties, the *Herald Tribune* was out of business, and Sam Rubenstein now worked for his son. "His father was the receptionist, file clerk, and everything else," says Tompkins.

Howard began attending meetings of the board, and his association with commercial real-estate kingpins like Harry Helmsley, the Rudin family, and Alan Tishman began in those meetings. "Howard knew strategy," says Lew Rudin; "he was very astute, very decent, not pushy. Respect developed between he and I."

Rubenstein cemented those relationships when he helped the landlords form the Commercial Properties Association in the late sixties. Many of its members became clients. "They'd ask my opinion, my political opinion," Rubenstein says. "How do I think this new mayor will deal with real estate? What do you think the City Council's attitude is? To this day, that's how they use me." Then the bottom fell out of the city's commercial-real-estate market. "We were worried about keeping people in the city and paying rent," says Rudin. So in 1970, he and Rubenstein renamed the landlord group the Association for a Better New York, its admittedly self-serving mandate "to maintain and promote the city's position."

escribed Rubenstein as "the greatest

ebecca at the well."

"That was really the beginning of [my] understanding of crisis issues," Rubenstein says. Not coincidentally, ABNY's efforts to restore New York's luster brought its P.R. adviser more clients. "If you trusted him to save the city," says Rudin, "you had to trust him with your own business."

Abe Beame did. "I used to treasure his advice in the political arena," says the ex-mayor. "I learned to depend on his thinking." After losing his first mayoral bid, in 1965, Beame paid the P.R. man $17,500 to handle his primary runoff in 1973. That November, Beame became New York's first Jewish mayor.

Rubenstein spent the next four years as Beame's closest unpaid adviser. He vowed not to abuse his position, and insists he never did. "I don't sell that, and I've never sold it," he says. "I don't tell people, 'I'm wired; hire me.' " Regardless, in Beame's first year in office, when city lobbyists were required to register for the first time, Rubenstein's firm ranked first of 67.

In the years that followed, Democratic politicians effectively took charge of real-estate development in New York. That made Rubenstein's connections much more alluring for builders. Today, he downplays his lobbying efforts, perhaps because they quickly became controversial. Rubenstein went too far when he called Beame for one of his clients, who wanted to open an amusement park in Staten Island. Residents screamed fix, and he quickly resigned the account. "I probably didn't pay attention to it or the resistance to it," he says. "And that happens; that's happened in my career." (Indeed, it's happened repeatedly. A few years later, he gave up contracts with four state agencies to head off conflict-of-interest charges. "Maybe I wasn't mature enough to understand it," he says. He was 50 years old at the time.)

All the controversy proved that Rubenstein had arrived. Though his four years as the unpaid head of Beame's kitchen cabinet cost him short-term, it paid off when it became clear in August 1975 that the city was running out of money and hurtling toward default on $8 billion in short-term municipal debt. Rubenstein's role in the crisis was small but decisive, and he calls it "the best time in my life."

At the request of Judah Gribetz, an aide to Governor Carey who lived in the Rockaways near Beame and Rubenstein, Rubenstein carried messages, made bad news palatable for the mayor, and helped keep the fragile talks from being derailed by animosity between Carey, who'd opposed the Brooklyn machine, and Beame, who personified it. "Abe had many dark, dire nights," says union adviser Jack Bigel. "Howard helped. It doesn't sound like much. It was much more than that."

The city was forced to live on an allowance and survived. Abe Beame's mayoralty didn't. Ed Koch ran against him and became mayor, and the night he was elected, an interesting conversation may or may not have taken place somewhere out in the gray zone. A story has been floating around for years that the night Koch won, Rubenstein called David Garth, Koch's political strategist. "Congratulations," Rubenstein supposedly said. "It's your city now."

Rubenstein denies the conversation took place and suggests I call Garth about it.

In fact, Garth confirms it. "I was so surprised to hear from him," he says. "I said, 'I'm not interested. It's not my city. I don't intend to handle people who do business with City Hall.' He says it didn't happen? *Bullshit.*"

Though Rubenstein was nowhere near as close to Koch as he'd been to Beame, his influence lingered. "It had to do with perceptions," he says, "with people seeing my name, seeing me in the context of the municipal crisis. I was still looking at myself as a kid from Brooklyn, but I was representing the mayor. I met all the unions then. I met David Rockefeller. I met Felix Rohatyn."

Another reason his influence lingered was his new No. 1 client, Rupert Murdoch, who bought the New York *Post* and *New York* Magazine in 1976 amid swirls of suspicion and controversy. Murdoch hired Don Kummerfeld, who'd been one of Abe Beame's deputy mayors, as the president of his company in 1978. Kummerfeld in turn suggested that Murdoch hire Rubenstein. "He felt I was a newcomer and needed some help when I was getting beaten up by everyone," Murdoch says. "It didn't worry me much, but it seemed to worry everyone around me."

Ever since, clients have hoped Rubenstein could influence the *Post's* gleefully provocative coverage. It can seem that way when Rubenstein's clients, and the P.R. man himself, are regularly fluffed in the Neal Travis column, or when reporter Maggie Haberman, daughter of top Rubenstein exec Nancy Haberman, reviews an obscure small-press book that happens to lionize Sam Rubenstein, a book Rubenstein happens to have a stack of on his desk. "The *Post* carries his water," a competitor insists. But Rubenstein clients are savaged as often as they are treated civilly. Just ask Ronald Perelman. "People get attacked in the *Post,* they call me," says Rubenstein. "I say, 'I don't edit the *Post.* I didn't place that story, and I'm not calling them!' "

Still, Murdoch can do no wrong. "I've spent hours with him," Rubenstein says. "I know him intimately. He's a genius. He had a vision of communications. I've never met anybody before or since that has had that vision. And he was not motivated by money; he was motivated by communications. And he would spend a lot of time teaching me and explaining to me where he was going, and I loved him for it—and I became very loyal to him. Nothing would break me away from Rupert Murdoch." Indeed, he stayed with Murdoch when the media magnate was forced to sell the paper in 1988. But Rubenstein introduced him to Peter Kalikow (another client), who bought it, and played a role when Murdoch got it back from Abe Hirschfeld in 1993. "He didn't need me, but I knew the players," Rubenstein says. "I helped save the paper. Did I show you the tie they both signed for me?"

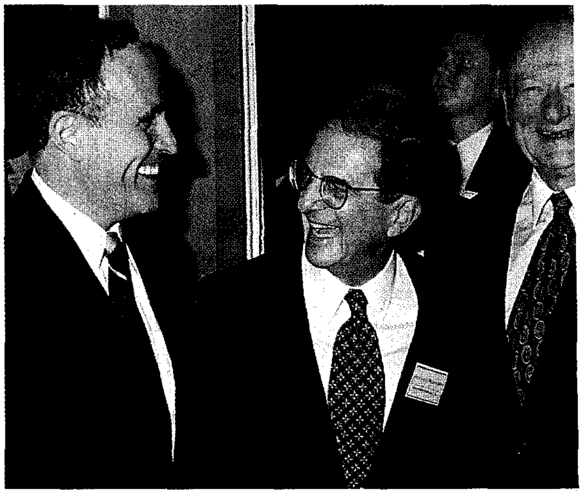
DAVID DINKINS'S RELATIONSHIP with Rubenstein went back over twenty years, to the day when Dinkins rescued him from an angry Harlem crowd, demanding money from a client, McDonald's, in exchange for community support of its restaurants. He vowed to return the favor, and less than a year after Dinkins's election as mayor in November 1989, he got the chance. *Time* magazine had just run a cover story headlined THE ROTTING OF THE BIG APPLE, citing rising crime, declining civility, and a black boycott of a Korean-run grocery. Rubenstein was invited to give his advice. A few months later, he was back. This time he called Dinkins.

On Monday night, August 19, 1991, a car in a rabbi's motorcade in Crown Heights struck and killed a 7-year-old black child, Gavin Cato. A riot broke out, and a Hasidic student, Yankel Rosenbaum, was killed by black youths. The situation was still out of control two mornings later when Rubenstein called the mayor to express the Jewish community's grave concern that it wasn't getting adequate protection.

In October 1992, Lemrick Nelson was acquitted in state court of Rosenbaum's murder. That night, a band of Hasidim marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall in protest. A month later, a multi-million-dollar class-action lawsuit was filed by the Hasidic community against Dinkins, his police commissioner, and the city. And Rubenstein himself came under fire by a group of Jewish activists for his representation of WLIB, a black-oriented station which had been singled out as a symbol of anti-Jewish hatemongering.

That's when Rubenstein brokered a meeting between moderate Hasidic leaders and Mayor Dinkins. He invited them and Dinkins to his home while he was sitting shiva—the Jewish mourning ritual—for his mother, thinking it "a perfect opportunity where neither side can do something either rash or violent," he says. The Hasidim and Dinkins were proper, but stone-cold, with each other. "We sat for a good hour. I told them the hatred had gone far enough, and they are throwing gasoline on that fire if they continue the rhetoric."

Soon after, in a public display of what can best be described as mere civility, the press was in attendance when Dinkins and a group of rabbis emerged from a follow-up meeting with everyone's spokesman Rubenstein at their side. "It wasn't really totally solved, but I think I helped," he says.



"I call him EMS," says *Post* columnist Ja

death and Howard gets him to the hosp

He helped the Hasidim much more when he told the official commission investigating Crown Heights about his warning call to the mayor and gave a deposition to that effect in their civil suit. "That was an irritant," a Dinkins aide admits. Yet Rubenstein will not criticize Dinkins. "I'll just let my actions speak for me," he says.

Some Hasidim, too, still remember the events with bitterness. Isaac Abraham, spokesman for the Rosenbaum family, calls the Dinkins-Hasid summit "a well-publicized farce." A leading rabbi in Crown Heights says Rubenstein was just shutting down the noisy and embarrassing protests on behalf of more-upscale Jews. Another Jewish community leader puts Rubenstein's actions down to pure self-interest. "He sees his friend getting beaten up, so he engineers this meeting [to] protect his friend and project himself in the role of peacemaker and major player."

These charges infuriate Rubenstein. "I'm so serious about it," he sputters. "In the black community and in the Jewish community, I devote hours and hours. I'm chairing all kinds of events to raise money in both communities. I give hundreds of thousands of dollars away. I don't publicize it. And that's as significant to me as anything I do in my business."

And certainly, Rubenstein's immediate self-interest was not served by what happened next. Jews backed the Republican Giuliani in his race against Dinkins in unprecedented numbers.

Though nominally for Dinkins, Rubenstein wasn't far behind. In 1995, he co-hosted a cocktail party that raised

Photographs: this page, above, Robin Platzer/Twin Images; opposite page, bottom, Mike Albans/AP/Wide World.

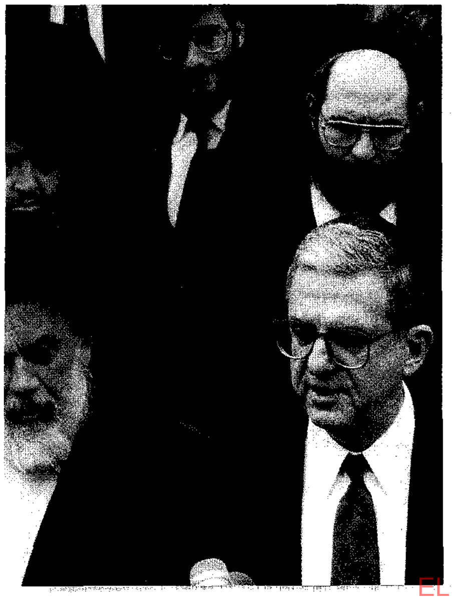
200,000 for Giuliani. "Howard suc-eeds because he supports winners," an x-Dinkins aide notes dryly.

HE DOESN'T ALWAYS, THOUGH. The most publicized aspect of Rubenstein's businesses is damage control. Celebrity of any kind "is high-risk territory," Rubenstein says. His lifesaving record is quite impressive—even if one eliminates clients who were actually handled by employees like Dan Klores, who managed many of the crises Rubenstein gets credit for (he has since started his own company; he represents *New York* Magazine).

Rubenstein won't discuss specifics. "They are hurt, and they're angry," he says of his scandal clients. "They've had years of adulation—and then suddenly the applause turns to boos. I say, 'Look, we'll talk in confidence. I want you to tell me the truth. And if you don't want to tell me the truth, don't lie. Just say you're not going to discuss it.' I would say that 99 percent, maybe a little less, level with me. I like to think that a client who will tell me the truth can change his or her life around."

Warring factions **Clockwise from top, Rubenstein with Cardinal O'Connor in 1988; with David Dinkins in 1993; with New York Jewish leaders in 1992; and with Ed Koch and Mayor Giuliani in 1994.**

wfield. "Somebody's bleeding to fore we can kill him."



Strategies differ. "You make an effort to humanize the client if it's consistent with what the client usually would do. It depends on the client," he says with a laugh.

When Kathie Lee Gifford was accused of making clothes in sweatshops, Rubenstein turned the story on its head. "I don't think she had the faintest clue that the sweatshops existed," he says. "When I met with [Gifford and her husband, Frank], they were willing to walk away entirely from their products. And I said, 'With your fame, you could lead a crusade against sweatshops.' So together with their lawyer, we mapped out a program that involved the union, the cardinal, the secretary of Labor. We met the governor, we met the president. They couldn't break through the media clutter to tell the story. She was the horse that they could ride to a successful attack on sweatshops."

Marv Albert hired him within 24 hours of his indictment on charges of biting and forcing oral sex on a lover. As new bombs—three-way sex, cross-dressing, transvestites, dominatrices, and hookers—exploded around the sportscaster, Albert gave a press conference (with his children in the front row), insisted he was innocent, and didn't say another word until after his guilty plea for biting. Then he went on a TV tour skewed toward gentle interviewers.

Rubenstein was criticized for all of that, but it was done at Albert's insistence, says someone close to the sportscaster. "He wanted to be heard," the source says. "He's a broadcaster. Marv thought he'd convince people he was right and only made it worse. He never said, 'I'm sorry, I was wrong, I have a problem.' When he came back six months later, he'd been through therapy, and he did say it." By that time, Rubenstein was out of the picture, but he expresses a grim satisfaction. "He told me it was consensual," Rubenstein says. "I believe him. I don't think he's a criminal."

He'd represented Harry and Leona Helmsley separately and together for 30 years when the couple was charged with tax evasion. He did what he could, notably encouraging Leona to light up the Empire State Building, but she went to jail anyway. En route, the Queen of Mean fired him for delivering papers to her by messenger instead of coming in person. "That was a 30-second firing, that was pique, that was all," he says. "She was upset that her P.R. was terrible. Of course it was terrible."

"Do they ever get it, that it's them, not you?" I ask. Rubenstein won't even address the question. "I'm not dealing with that one!" he barks. "It's not them. It's me! I take the blame." He laughs and returns to more comfortable ground: plugging. "I'm sad about Leona and what happened to her. She gave a million and a half to the churches in the South that were burned down. She won't let me publicize it. I haven't given up. You've got to bide your time sometimes."

AS RUBENSTEIN APPROACHES his forty-fifth anniversary in the business—which he'll celebrate, as he does every five years, by giving away a bag of money himself and tossing a big boldfaced bash at Tavern on the Green in September—employees, competitors, and clients are biding their time, too. "I have no desire to leave, because it's exciting, I can give something," Rubenstein says. "But there certainly will be a Rubenstein Associates [without me]."

Competitors are quick to disagree. They think his senior staff and big clients will cut and run. "He will make no partners," says a sniper. "There is no sharing glory. He has Pekingese handling clients. He gets away with murder." And when there is no more Howard? "It'll be Yugoslavia, ripe for the plucking," chuckles another competitor. "Howard's the magnet. There's nothing else."

"Maybe I have to hire a P.R. firm," Rubenstein jokes in response.

Richard and Steven Rubenstein, his two sons, are the presumptive heirs. Howard seems to relate better to Steven, 29, who says he hopes to become just the sort of honest broker his father is and has already started cultivating future power people. Richard, 33, a rap-loving clubgoer, is more of a hustling showbiz P.R. man; he's had a longer but more difficult tenure at his dad's firm. Richard chafed at being the resented first child in the company. But in the past few years, he's said to have found his feet by gaining independence of a sort.

Richard has two businesses of his own, with separate staffs and separate client lists. They are not completely separate, though. They share quarters with their father's firm. And sometimes it's confusing who is repre- *(continued on page 80)*

YOU'RE NOT FAMOUS

. . . UNTIL YOU'VE HAD YOUR PICTURE TAKEN WITH THIS MAN

BY E. JEAN CARROLL

Paul Walton with, from top left: Don King, John Travolta, Katie Couric, Morgan Fairchild, Morgan Freeman, Dolly Parton, John F. Kennedy Jr., Yassir Arafat, Cindy Crawford, Ru Paul, Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, Madonna, Janet Jackson, Sandra Bullock, Brad Pitt, Jennifer Aniston, Matthew Perry, Matt LeBlanc, Courteney Cox, Gwyneth Paltrow, Sharon Stone, Jesse Jackson, Larry King, Robin Williams, Warren Beatty, Barbra Streisand, George Stephanopoulos, Al D'Amato, Gene Siskel, Liam Neeson, Antonio Banderas, Ann-Margret, Clint Black, Jessica Lange, Dan Rather, Jason Alexander, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Jerry Seinfeld, Michael Richards, Rosie Perez, Leonardo DiCaprio, Will Smith, Steve Martin, Uma Thurman, Nicole Kidman, Kelsey Grammer, Steven Spielberg, Maria Shriver, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAUL WALTON

BACKSTAGE AT THE GRAMMYS

Hiya! Paul Walton from San Diego! Hi! How are ya! Omigod! There's the host! What's her name? What the dickens is her name—*Rosie*! Hi! Rosie! Paul Walton from San Diego! You did so great, Rosie! You were great! Great! You were—oh, hi! It's Paul Walton from San Diego! I thought I recognized you! Let's get a picture! Thank you! No, I'm still single! One of these days, I'm going to find the girl of my dreams! Hey! How are you? Hi! Paul Wa—*Ooooooooooh!* There's the Dixie Chicks! Omigod! What's that Dixie Chick's name? I wish I had my camera! I just gave somebody my camera! Where's the gentleman I gave my camera to? I'm going to try to locate him—geez! I feel naked. I have three rolls of film and no camera. It's almost like I have no pants. Oh! There he is! Wheew! Okay. Okay. I got the camera. The Dixie Chicks are great! What's your name? Martie Seidel! Thank God I have my camera back. Martie! Could I ask you for one quick picture? You're great! Paul Walton from San Diego. I own a hotel in Escondido. Health spa and resort. I'd like to give you my card. You can come and sleep over! I love life! This is like climbing the highest, highest mountain! John Tesh! Hi, I'm Paul Walton! Somebody as tall as me! The Hite Report! I have to get my camera! This is the problem, I keep giving my camera to people and—Hi! Paul Walton! Oh! It's Martie Seidel again! John, may I have one quick picture? Wow! With John Tesh!

THE ZEIT GUY

—You're filtering the Zeitgeist, Paul.

—The Zeit guys, who do you mean? What Zeit guys?

—*ZzzziiiiiTTTT! GiiiisssssTTTT!*

—Oh! I've heard of that term—what is it?

—You're capturing the trend of the moment—i.e., celebrity.

—Yeah, I'm the living date-time stamp. You know how some people want their photographs stamped with the date and time? I hate that. My date-time stamp is myself in the pictures. I can look at my hairstyle and suit in a photo and tell you exactly what date and time it was taken. And next year if everybody says the Zeitgeist of Celebrity is over and it's suddenly the Zeitgeist of Hurricanes or the Zeitgeist of Natural Wonders, I'll be the Zeit Guy there too. You should see my majestic pictures of Hurricane Bob! And the Grand Canyon, the Pyramids, the Matterhorn, and Plitvice in Yugoslavia. Because all I'm doing is recording the historical moment.

THE FOOD LINE

I'm looking for the girl of my dreams. I know she's out there somewhere, so I'm *events*-oriented. I'm not celebrity-oriented. I'm events-oriented.

I *went* to Hurricane Hugo. I went to the falling of the Berlin Wall, the earthquake in San Francisco, the bombing in Oklahoma City the next day. I was at the Mississippi floods. I'd love to be a hero. I'd love to save someone, and if it happens to be a pretty girl, it wouldn't be a bad way of meeting.

Clinton's bus tour? I got on his bus at Lexington and rode all the way to St. Louis! Whether it's a special event, a tragic event, a celebrity event—these are the defining moments of my life.

I'm not going to the Academy Awards to take a picture with any specific actor or actress. I'm going for the event. These actors and famous people, politicians, musicians, whatever, they're just an ancillary thing. They happen to be there and they happen to be in my food line. So, gosh, I might as well talk to them. But the primary thing is just going to the event and finding the girl of my dreams. I go to the Polo matches in the Hamptons, spring break in Daytona Beach, the running of the bulls in Pamplona, the Jazz Festival in New Orleans, the Grammys, the Earth Summit, the MTV Awards, the inaugurations, the United Nations Commission on Truth in El Salvador, Cannes, Fantasy Fest in Key West, Telluride, NATPE, the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines looking for a cornfed girl, the Golden Globes, Carnival in Rio, National Press Club lunches, the Vermont Maple Syrup Celebration, the one-hundredth anniversary of North Dakota . . .

THE DAMSEL IN DISTRESS

You know what I used to do? When I was in high school and the first couple of years of college, I used to answer police calls. I had a little police scanner, and I monitored the police. I'd find out where all the action was—the car accidents, the robberies, the burglaries, and any crime that occurred, I'd hear about it. I knew every street in San Diego. And a lot of times I'd get there before the police would arrive and I would actually help the injured.

I used to work in an emergency room for two and a half years in high school, so I knew a little about life-saving measures, and oftentimes I'd help people before the police came.

And I always thought I might be able to save someone, and it would be the girl of my dreams.

The damsel in distress. That was the fantasy. That's always been the most powerful fantasy. Ever since I was in elementary school. To save the damsel. I'd suddenly be the hero. And she'd look at me in a whole different light.

You see, I was always very short. I didn't have a whole lot going for me physically. The only thing I had going for me was mentally, but guys didn't get the prettiest girls just because they were smart. Unfortunately. So the only way to maybe get a pretty girl was to help her, save her, rescue her, write a term paper for her, do something nice for her.

Answering police calls—I thought, that's the way.

I had a Mazda pickup truck with a camper shell. A very unassuming-type rescue vehicle. One night there was a traffic accident on top of the bridge to Mission Beach. An out-of-state plate. From Phoenix. All the Arizona people come here in the summer to the beach areas of San Diego.

It wasn't a major mishap, but it was enough that they needed assistance. And there was a beautiful girl. She had dark hair, dark eyes. Olive complexion. She didn't have a dress—I think it was shorts.

With, from top left: Mira Sorvino, Tom Hanks, Danny DeVito, Michael Douglas, Sean Connery, Samuel L. Jackson, Cameron Diaz, Mike Myers, Johnny Depp, Tupac Shakur, George Foreman, Cyndi Lauper, Goldie Hawn, Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Costner, Salma Hayek, Dustin Hoffman, Glenn Close, Ed Harris, Jimmy Smits.

She was dressed casually; it was summer.

I helped her. I'm not saying I saved her ife, but I helped her out, I assisted her. Not mouth-to-mouth, but I, you know, I made sure she was propped upright. Anyway, she saw me and I saw her; and suddenly the police came and they took her away to the hospital.

And I never got her name. I meant to go to the hospital that night, but I didn't know which one they took her to and it was too late. I always remembered her.

Then, about a year later, I was at the Rubin H. Fleet Science Theater in the museum, and suddenly this girl sees me, this gorgeous girl, and goes, "Oh, my God!" and she comes up to me and *hugs me!* And I'm lookin' around like, *My God, must be another guy, I don't belong here.*

And she says, "This is the guy that saved me! This is the guy that saved me!" she's saying to all her friends. "This is the guy when I was in that car accident, remember last year?" And she says, "Sweetheart, honey, come here, I want you to meet—this is the guy that saved me. This is my fiancé." Typical. Typical.

YALE AND HARVARD

My dad was born on the Lower East Side. His parents were in the *shmatte* industry. He went to CCNY and Yale. My mother's father was a traveling salesman. They actually think that I take after him. She went to the University of Maine and Harvard. My dad is originally Walovnick. He changed his name to Walton so he could get a government job. He was a chemical engineer. He worked in the civil service. My mother was a teacher.

> **"VINCE GILL! OH! SORRY! CLINT! CLINT BLACK! CLINT BLACK! IS IT ALL RIGHT TO TAKE A QUICK PICTURE WITH YOU, CLINT?"**

It was a content marriage. [Paul has two younger sisters, Ellie and Judy.] My parents had their happy moments. It wasn't the type of undying love and affection that I—well, they had their times. They had their downs. Well, it was never over anything too serious—I mean, it wasn't like he just would outright hit her, it would just be after they yelled and yelled and screamed or whatever and then maybe he just lost control and punched her in the face.

And remember when you're a kid, just not wanting to see, hearing—oh! She must be in pain!

I was very close to my mom. I was closer to my mother than to my father. I remember one day when—we had a house where if you chased each other, you ran in circles. My mom actually ran out and locked herself in the car, the family car. She knew my dad wouldn't do anything to that car, you know. She knew she was safe there. Then he'd go off, and she'd be able to emerge.

Well, I think my life, my entire life, is actually a reaction to my environment. I opted to go just the total opposite way.

Vince Gill! Oh! Sorry! Clint! Clint Black! Clint Black! Paul Walton from San Diego! Is it all right to take a quick picture with you, Clint? You're great! Thanks! Natalie Cole! Oh! If my mother were alive today! All these stars are wonderful! But nobody compares to my mom! Is it okay to take one quick picture with Natalie? Thank you very much! That was wonderful! Wonderful! Wonderful! I love this! I'm a people person! You can talk to people at events. Everybody is somebody. So everybody knows you're somebody. Nobody thinks your nobody!

THE PROM

—Here's a picture from the senior prom. The girl's a tenth-grader. You're supposed to go with a senior. I couldn't *find* a senior.

—Oh, I'm sorry.

—You notice how I just wasn't the fashion coordinator?

—I see that.

—Black shoes. Khaki pants.

—Why didn't you wear a dinner jacket? [*Jesus Christ, Paul! You're the biggest, galootinest, doofiest guy I ever met in my life! Not a cynical bone in yr. body. Never a cruel thought. Sweet-tempered, bumptious, Paul Walton from San Diego—like a force of nature! . . . and just ridiculously doofy.*]

—I didn't have one.

—You wore a gold shirt, a pea-green jacket, and khakis to your prom? With a rose-colored tie? This is the worst-lookin' outfit I ever saw. Was the girl embarrassed to be seen with you?

—Well, no. I didn't actually *go* with her. I actually went by myself and I met up with her there.

—Ah.

—And we were together for about an hour and took a *picture.*

—If anybody ever wants to know about how our celebrity culture works, this is how it works.

TIJUANA

From Paul's diary:

Headlines: stocks in recovery. Dow leaps eight points to 713.

Since my graduation didn't start until 9:45 A.M., I finished reading in bed the "Life Science Library" book called Growth.

. . . This evening Paul [a police-officer neighbor] *took us* [Paul and his friend Al] *to Tijuana. The cabdriver took us right to a bar with girls. A girl found me!*

She was dark-haired. She wasn't a skinny minny. See, what you do in Tijuana is, you go to a bar, you pick out who you want, then you go upstairs to the room.

She was a little frustrated because I wasn't getting so excited. Well, who could? I was kinda scared. But she was going to see that I got my money's worth.

She was probably 30. She could have been 40. To me she could have been—to me she was my mom. On top of me.

LABIA MINORA, LABIA MAJORA

There were a thousand people in my graduating class and I knew just about everyone's name. And I would always—going to the locker room, I used everybody's name. "Hi, Sarah, how ya doin'?" "John, hi," you know. They nicknamed me the Mayor. I knew everyone's first name. It takes a lot of effort. You gotta work.

If you know everyone, you don't have to fight.

Sort of like building up like in a bank, only it was intros. And you make a lot of deposits.

I gave the graduation speech. And I thought, *How ironic.* Here I am seemingly lecturing to my peers on how to be happy and telling them, ending my speech with, "Strive to be happy," and I realized I might be the only one who's not happy because I think I'm the last virgin.

I prided myself on knowing more about the female genitalia than the high-school seniors who wore their letterman jackets. I got good grades. I got all the questions right, but they had actually *seen* it.

What an idiot I was! What an idiot! So what? I knew all the parts. Labia minora, labia majora, you know, all this crap, who cares? What a loser I was. Who cares about the parts and the names? The Latin names.

FROM ZOD TO . . . ZEIT GUY!

I *still* think of myself as the little nerd in high school. That little middle-class nerdy high-school kid. The nerdy short, short high-school kid. I must have been such a nerd that I didn't even realize that I was a nerd, that's how much of a nerd I was. And so when I meet these celebrities, and I do some of these things, it gives me a little bit more confidence.

Hey! Mark! Mark McEwen! Hey! Paul Walton from San Diego. We gotta get a picture! Thanks! Thanks! Great! Bye, Mark! See ya! E! E Entertainment! There's—what's Joan Rivers's daughter's name? Melissa! I don't know anybody's name. Hi, Melissa! [A producer stops his forward progress] *Oh! They're going live! Sorry! Oops! There's Will Smith! Omigod! He's funny! Get ready! Here we go!—Wait! I thought it was Will. No, that wasn't Will. Have you seen Will Smith?*

THE OLYMPUS STYLUS

I'm not a paparazzi. I'm not interested in celebrities' personal lives. I don't even recognize them. I have to ask questions. Who the hell did I just take a picture of? I don't know who they are. I really don't. I hand the camera to whoever happens to be standing by. I don't live my life vicariously through them or anything like that. I'm too busy living my own life.

SORRY, LIAM

I have A-list files, B-files, and the rest of the files.

I've turned the pictures into small cards, like business cards. They're what I call my out-of-business cards. You see, when I was retired for eleven years, I didn't work. People would say:

"Do you have a business card?"

"Well, no, but I've got an out-of-business card." And I would give them one of the pictures, and they would go: "Oh! Cool!"

> **"I TAKE BEAUTIFUL PICTURES OF MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS AND STREAMS, BUT NOBODY WANTS THOSE NATURE PICTURES."**

Everyone liked it. Then I started giving them a stack, and I'd say: "Whichever one that you want, go ahead and choose."

And Liam [Neeson], I'm sorry, Liam, but even though you were an A, I thought—he went down to a B. No one recognized him. For whatever reason.

Here's Anne Bancroft, right? Look at her. No one knows who she is.

FORMER THORN IN SIDE OF SPRINT, NOW JET-SETTER

Paul Walton couldn't land the top job at US Sprint Communications Company, so he settled for a world tour. Walton is the once disgruntled San Diego salesman who railed about how management ran Sprint and campaigned to become its president.

. . . Walton financed the campaign and his subsequent travels with the $1.7 million settlement he won from Sprint over thousands of new accounts for which he said he signed up, but Sprint failed to connect.

—Mark Davis, business and financial reporter, *Kansas City Star*, February 12, 1989.

GETTING RICH

I started as a schoolteacher. I taught three years. Here in San Diego. I taught high school at the high school that I went to, as a matter of fact. Then I answered a tiny little classified ad in the newspaper. And I starting selling Sprint accounts. I set up a little card table on my former college campus, San Diego State, with two fluorescent signs that said, LONG DISTANCE CALLS, HALF PRICE. FREE SIGN-UP TODAY. And I was to make more money from that one day of signing up students than in a whole month of teaching school. The business grew. I had 400 reps. I had to pay my people. So maybe I ended up with about $4 million. But the 1.7 was basically my profit.

But Sprint didn't want to pay me. They thought they could get away with royally screwing me in the end. They thought I'd be happy with a final check of about $60,000. For my final accounts.

But I knew that I was owed more. And they knew it, too. This is how big companies screw the little guy, with all their big corporate attorneys.

"No," I said. "I'm not going to sue you; I'm just going to picket your front entrance. I'm going to hand out T-shirts to all your employees that say, US SPRINT, YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE A MINT UNLESS YOU GET ON THE BALL AND PAY PAUL.

They're not used to fighting outside a courtroom. And every week they kept raising it more, 60, to 80, to 150. I was just trying to get paid what I was already owed.

Finally they settled for $1.7 million, but I had to sign this big ten-page nondisclosure agreement saying I can't talk about this. I'm in the vice-president's office with the attorneys, in Kansas City. And they said:

"Here's your check, here's your $1.74 million check, just sign here."

And I looked it over. And I just felt, "This is what you *owe* me. This is my life. If I ever want to talk about this to anyone, I should be able to. I deserve it." And I gave them back their $1.74 million check.

I was living on the beach at the time. South Mission Beach. Here in San Diego. I got all the, what I called the trappings of civilization—the convertible, motorcycle, big-screen TV, beautiful CD stereo system, boardwalk, open door, beach. I had it all.

Anyway, a storm came. Fierce winds. Highest tides we had in years, and it came over the boardwalk and destroyed everything. I rarely lose my temper. But I lost my temper. When the attorney called me from Sprint and said, "Listen, pal, every day that you don't sign this agreement, we're going down $10,000," I lost it. I never—I never—I'll remember that to the day I die, how I lost it. I basically said:

"No, you listen here, pal. I'm gonna tell you what I'm gonna do to your company right now."

And I'm talking to him with muddy waters in my living room. It's a few days before the Super Bowl, and guess who is a proud sponsor of Super Bowl? And where is the 1988 Super Bowl being held?

San Diego.

I said: "You listen here. You're going to pay me that $1.74 million and I'm not going to sign a goddamn thing. And I'll tell you something. If I don't receive that check before Super Bowl, I'm going to ring Super Bowl with a plane saying, WHY CAN'T SPRINT PAY PAUL? I'm going to circle your Super Bowl and we're going to pass out T-shirts to every single person there saying US SPRINT YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE A MINT UNLESS YOU GET ON THE BALL AND PAY PAUL. And I'm going to have picketers and protesters there and you better believe it!"

The day before Super Bowl, I was FedExed a check for $1.74 million, and didn't have to sign a damn thing. After I cashed the check, that's when I ran for president of the company.

"ENJOY THE ULTIMATE IN SECLUSION TEMPERED WITH EXCITEMENT."

[From the brochure]

Castle Creek is a small, elegant, and personalized inn offering all the comfort and features of a large resort and spa but on a more friendly, courteous, personalized level.

Located in the scenic foothills 45 minutes north of San Diego International Airport. In the vicinity are wineries, Lawrence Welk Village and the world-famous Wild Animal Park.

When I retired from Sprint, I put most of my money into this place. I was a mortgage holder. They paid me in trust all these years. Eighty-five hundred a month. I was retired for eleven years. Then suddenly they stopped paying. I had to take it over. It was broken, and I'm trying to fix it.

I've never had a class in hotel management, or anything remotely near it. This is just another form of business. I will rise to the challenge. If I can get it turned around, and I'm able to get out of this with life and limb, I'm set for the rest of my life. One more time.

WOMEN

I broke up with the woman I'd been with for five years when I retired. I retired when I was 30. I was retired for eleven

With, from top left: Ellen DeGeneres, Anne Heche, Gillian Anderson, David Duchovny, Tony Bennett, Beck, Alice Cooper, Howard Stern, Oprah Winfrey, Rosie O'Donnell, David Letterman, Jay Leno, Paul Schaffer, Demi Moore and Tom Cruise, Jim Carrey and Lauren Holly, Kim Basinger and Alec Baldwin, Brooke Shields and Andre Agassi, Claudia Schiffer and David Copperfield, Hugh Grant and Elizabeth Hurley, and E. Jean Carroll.

years. I had the money and the freedom, the time, you name it, to be able to spend with a woman of my choice. But it was always so difficult to find her, and when I met a nice girl it was difficult because I didn't have a "job." I might as well have been disconnected from society. I was out on the outer fringe as far as they're concerned. I was strange. I was weird. They couldn't understand how someone so young would not work, and they would question why, not in an open way, but question it almost more in a deprecating way. So it seemed like it was more difficult having the money and time.

Now that I'm here at the resort, now that I don't have the freedom, *now* I have legitimacy. Now they want to give me time, and I don't have the time to give them. This is very upsetting to me.

MANHATTAN

But as a single guy, I just want to be in New York City. That's really where I want to be. That's where I belong. You know why? You don't have to drive. I've never met one person driving a car.

THE BY-PRODUCT

Some people probably think, *Jeez, what a frivolous life. Is that what he lives for? Just for a picture of a celebrity?* But that's just the by-product. It's just a souvenir of the wonderful people I've met. And I take lots of souvenir pictures of just regular people. But you know, other people don't care to see the pictures of regular people. They want celebrities.

So it makes it sound like all I do is chase celebrities, but actually it's just the opposite. I take beautiful pictures of mountains and valleys and streams and rivers, but no one wants those nature pictures. They want celebrities.

So I want you to know that my hobby is just talking pictures, period. I'm having a great time and the photograph is the proof.

ROSEBUD

—I remember once I went to a play called *The King and I.* And Sid Caesar was in it. My mother took me to the play.

—Sid Caesar?

—I didn't know who the hell Sid Caesar was. I just remember meeting him with my mother.

—Were you excited?

—I was excited because my mom was excited.

—Ah-ha!

—My mother was excited. We met Sid Caesar! She was *very* excited. Jeez.

—And you *saw* she was excited. [*Ye gods. Days interviewing the fellow—the Polo Lounge, Castle Creek, Tijuana, throw in the pothouse where the trollop made a man of him . . . phone calls . . . the Grammys . . . always looking for the context, and the context turns out to be not some huge spanking comment on our celebrity-crazed culture, not that "the culture" produced a certain kind of fantastically doofy chap, but simply that a fellow is looking for the girl of his dreams and making his own personal* People *magazine for his mother.*]

—Very excited.

—And how did that affect you?

—Oh, I was so happy for my mom that I got excited.

—Well, well, well. Aren't we onto something here?

—Well [*shrugging*], yeah. Maybe.

100 PERCENT CORRECT

My philosophy is that, well, first of all I don't regret very much in my past. Because the proof is in the pudding. And the pudding is right now, right here. Right this minute. The fact that I'm alive and thinking about life and talking like this means I did *everything* right in my entire life.

All the right decisions. All the correct left turns. All the correct right turns. I went straight when I was supposed to go straight. I made 100 percent correct decisions. So therefore, I truly can't regret a thing by the mere virtue that I'm alive to even talk about it. Life is paramount. And I'm not talking about Paramount Studios.

I photograph a lot of things because I like to preserve the moment. Photographing is the quickest way to capture the moment and then move on.

POSTSCRIPT: THE ACADEMY AWARDS

At the Governor's Ball after the Academy Awards each year . . . you want to know what I'm really thinking? *Why am I here? Meeting all these strangers? All these celebrities? They're not going to do anything for me. I'm not here to network. I'm not here to see my old friends. It's just a sea of strangers, familiar strangers because you recognize them, but nonetheless they're strangers.* And I say to myself, *If I'm here next year by myself, I'm a loser.*

Because where I would rather be is watching this on TV in Aspen with the woman I'm in love with by my side lying next to a fireplace. ■

sex, lies, and

Broadway's nasty-talk season continues with Patrick Marber's *Closer,* about two pairs of deceptively honest lovers. **By Jennifer Senior**

IS IT A COINCIDENCE? THAT JUST TWELVE DAYS AFTER *THE BLUE Room* closes, another friskily hyped British import washes ashore to take its place? *Closer,* which begins previews at the Music Box Theatre on March 9, also promises a glamorous cast (one fourth Natasha Richardson, one fourth Rupert Graves, one fourth Ciaran Hinds, one fourth Anna Friel) and, more important, delectable filth: Its best-publicized scene, cited endlessly in reviews and the copious literature of coming attractions, involves a cybersex encounter between its two male characters, who sit at individual terminals while their ribald dialogue pops up on a big screen behind them. One, pretending to be a woman, declares he has "epic tits," says he fantasizes about tending to strangers "like a cum-hungry bitch," and ends the scene by faking a virtual orgasm, pounding out a string of "oh-oh-oh"s and QWERTY nonsense to show his rapture.

Closer, it should be noted, isn't nearly as shallow as *The Blue Room,* a mere slip of a play starring Nicole Kidman in a mere slip. It won its 34-year-old author, Patrick Marber, London's most prestigious awards, including the Critics' Circle, the Evening Standard, and the Olivier. But *Closer* does seem to invite the same lurid headlines, and like *The Blue Room,* it isn't nearly as bawdy as advertised. In fact, to American audiences, the most striking thing about *Closer* probably won't be its explicit language—there really isn't all that much, aside from that brief cyber scene—but the aggressive candor with which its characters discuss their sexual and romantic indiscretions. It's as if they've all come down with a case of lover's Tourette's.

Sample exchange between a married couple:

I slept with someone in New York. A whore. I'm sorry. Please don't leave me.

Why?

For sex. I wanted sex. I used a condom . . .

Was it . . . good?

. . . Yes.

In the context of the recent impeachment proceedings, such talk, and there's a lot of it, is almost unimaginable. It inflicts so much pain, it makes Clinton's lying seem virtuous. By disclosing what they truly think and feel, the characters of *Closer* seem familiar but also stylized: How many people really speak this way? Isn't the ability to euphemize what separates us from beasts?

"I'm a bit more repressed than the characters in the play," says Marber, "but I believe people *would* behave in this way. They just don't necessarily exist next door." His characters aren't your friends and neighbors, in other words—or, for that matter, in *Your Friends and Neighbors,* a heartless movie to which *Closer* has sometimes been compared. (In fact, *Closer* made its debut in May 1997, long before Neil LaBute's film, and the play is much funnier and more forgiving at its core.) For all their emotional guerrilla tactics, it's also clear that Marber's characters deceive one another as much as they come clean; it's just that we don't see it. The play, which takes place over the course of three years, spotlights a series of pivotal moments in relationships—which happen here to be literal moments of truth.

"On some level," muses Marber, "you could say that *Closer* is about love as a poker game. I'm obviously interested in the dynamic of power, the way people operate with and against each other, and how your best friend might be your worst enemy." The analogy makes sense. Marber's first and only other play, *Dealer's Choice,* is all about the interpersonal politics of gambling.

PATRICK MARBER HAS A PRETTY GOOD POKER FACE HIMSELF. WHILE studying at Oxford, he would sneak away to the Golden Nugget on Shaftesbury Avenue in London and lose more money than he now cares to think about. Today, as he sips on a Coke at the Paramount (the butt of one of *Closer*'s funniest jokes), he seems determined to remain as vague as smoke. "I disclaim this interview," he jokily says at one point. "There's always a deception in an interview," he adds at another. Still later: "You feel alive when you tell a lie. You lie to someone, you have a little secret."

So the question eventually arises: Does Marber lie to journalists? "Oh, yeah," he says, unexpectedly. "I've told the odd little lie." Such as . . . ? "I can't remember. I've been doing it for years. Everyone lies in interviews." He smiles and reaches for a piece of cheese. He's a nice-looking man with an open smile and several charming nervous habits, including the tendency to play with whatever scraps of paper are available to him—napkins, empty sugar packets. "I've determined that from now on, I'm going to lie a bit more in interviews," he continues. "What I want to do is invent an alternative back story for my life."

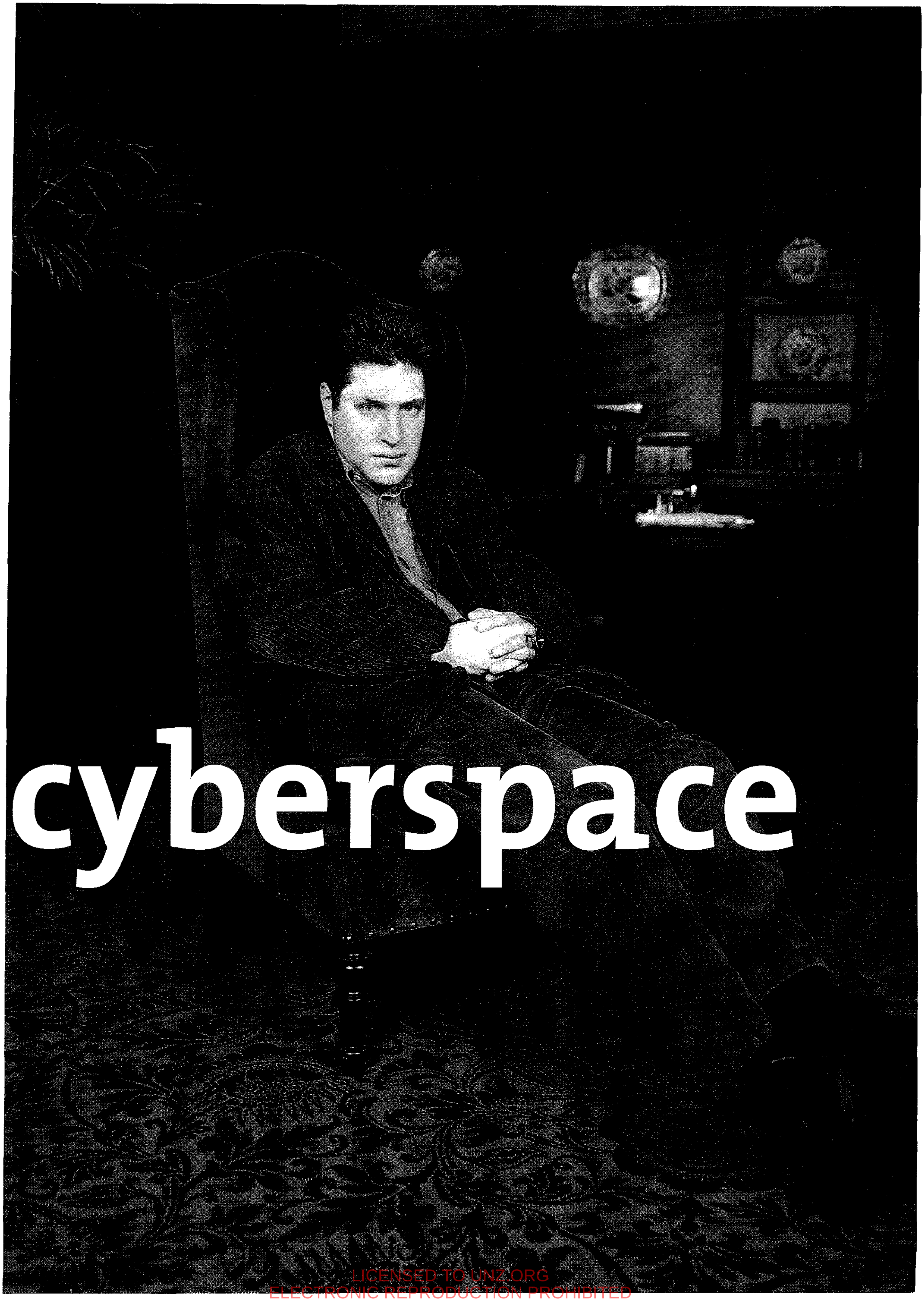
The company of *Closer,* whom Marber is also directing, probably wouldn't find this admission terribly shocking. "Every time he gives me a note," says Hinds, the only cast holdover from the London production, "I say to him, 'You're cajoling me, you're seducing me. What am I to believe?' "

Marber grew up in a middle-class Jewish family in Wimbledon, near the tennis club—at least, that's what he tells journalists. After graduating from Oxford in 1986, he tried for several years to be a stand-up comic, but he wasn't especially funny. "I was a very dark version of Pee-wee Herman," he says. "My routine was a bit absurd. It was stupid." He moved on to writing for television and radio, and in 1995, the Royal National Theatre gambled on *Dealer's Choice.* It paid off big-time, earning both great notices and profits. (The play also did well here, albeit on a more modest scale, at the Manhattan Theatre Club in 1997.)

But with *Closer,* Marber earned himself comparisons to Harold Pinter. "I'm a newcomer with two plays," he marvels, "and yet I'm being treated as someone whose opinions are of value. I'm still developing a style—I'm not a full-grown writer yet—and as you've found out, my opinions are nonexistent, or they're of no value, because I'm a fledgling. *I demand to be treated like a fledgling!*"

At playwriting, perhaps. But in relationships, the subject so brutally examined in *Closer,* Marber appears to be excelling, which should give his fans some hope. The playwright dedicated the work to his girlfriend, an actress he has been seeing for three years. "It's weird," he says, "because I worked on this play, which is about the horrors of it all, but I couldn't be happier myself." ■

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES SMOLKA



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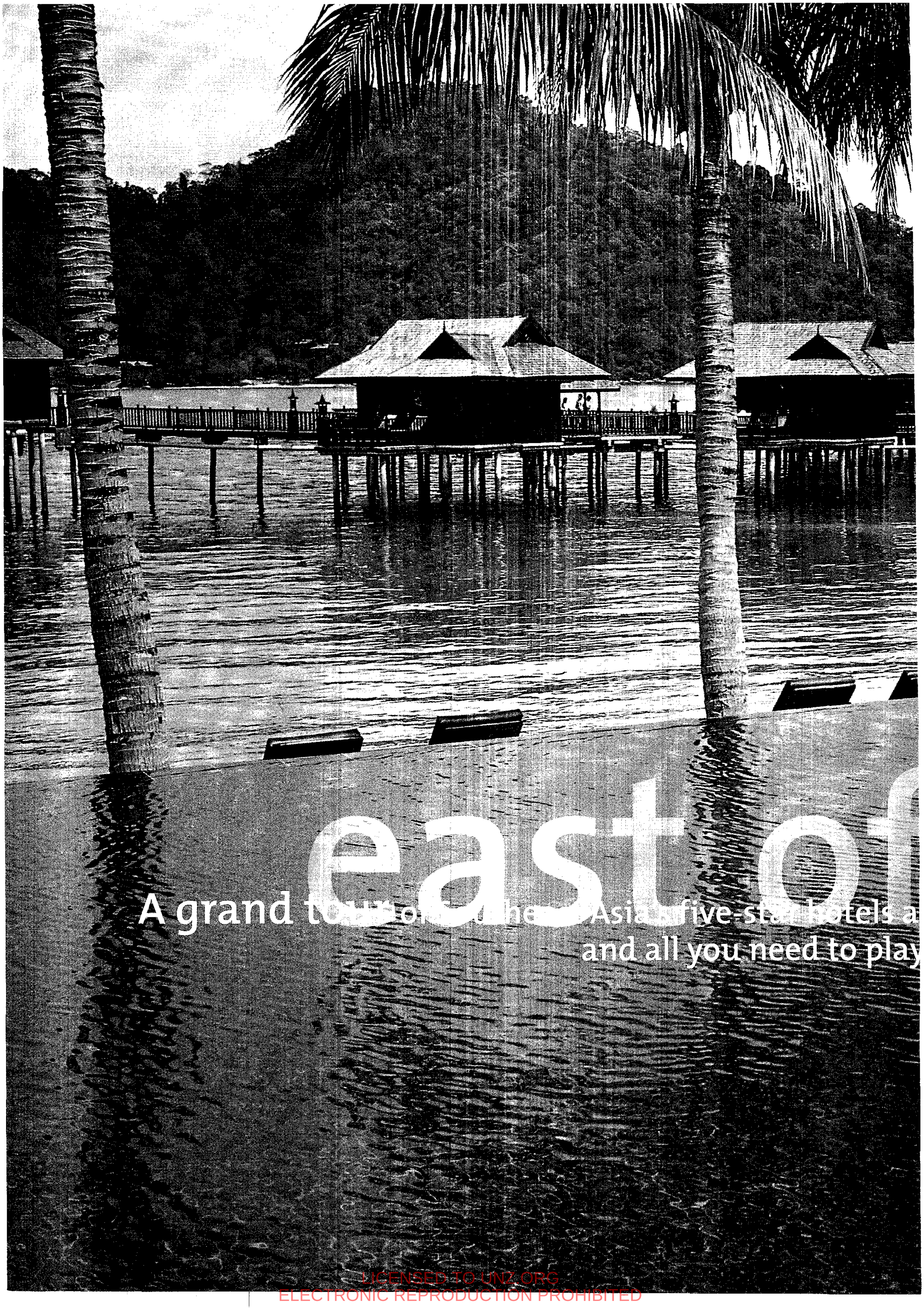

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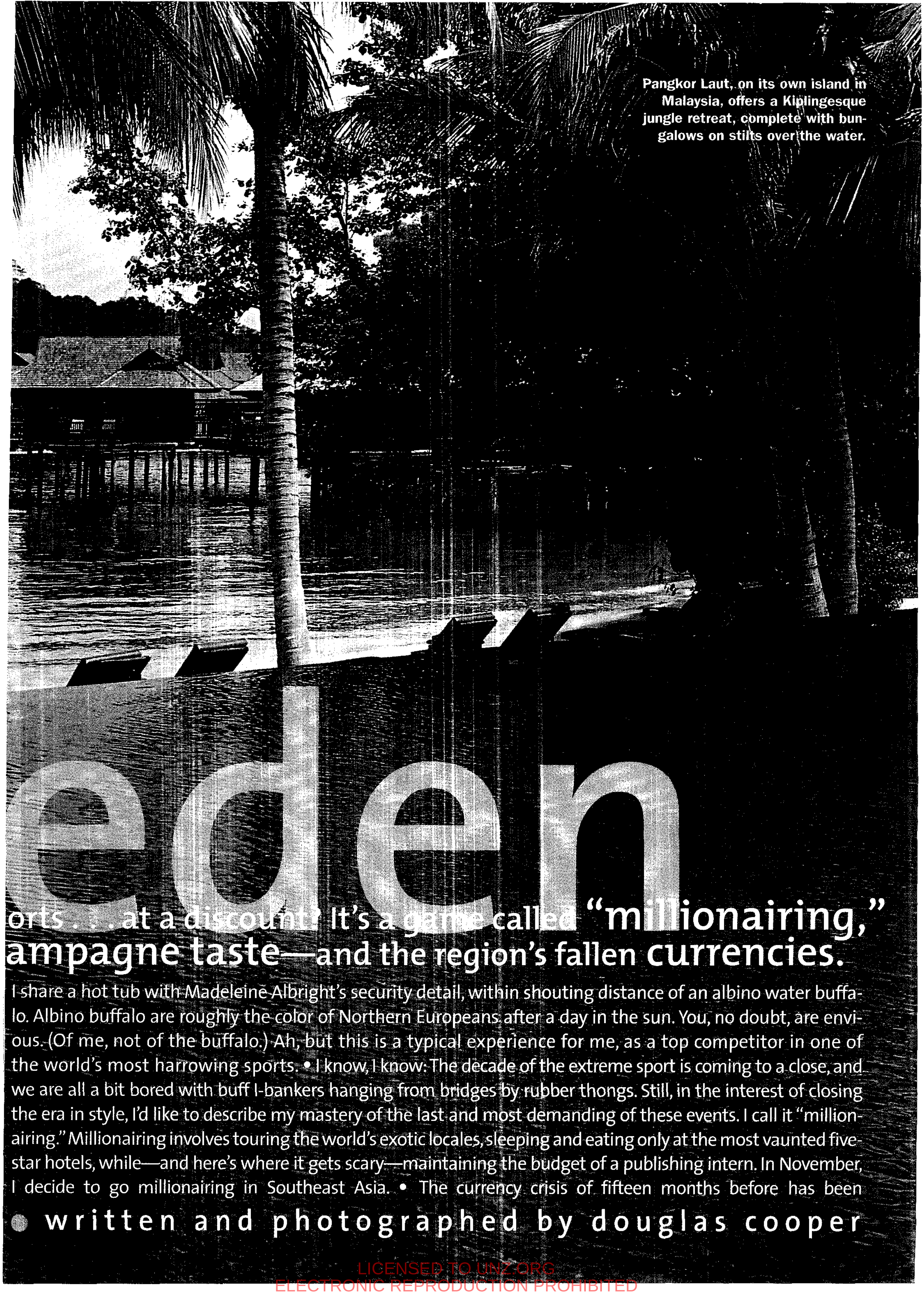
A grand tour of Southeast Asia's five-star hotels a
and all you need to play



Pangkor Laut, on its own island in Malaysia, offers a Kiplingesque jungle retreat, complete with bungalows on stilts over the water.

eden

orts . . . at a discount? It's a game called "millionairing,"
ampagne taste—and the region's fallen currencies.

I share a hot tub with Madeleine Albright's security detail, within shouting distance of an albino water buffalo. Albino buffalo are roughly the color of Northern Europeans after a day in the sun. You, no doubt, are envious. (Of me, not of the buffalo.) Ah, but this is a typical experience for me, as a top competitor in one of the world's most harrowing sports. • I know, I know: The decade of the extreme sport is coming to a close, and we are all a bit bored with buff I-bankers hanging from bridges by rubber thongs. Still, in the interest of closing the era in style, I'd like to describe my mastery of the last and most demanding of these events. I call it "millionairing." Millionairing involves touring the world's exotic locales, sleeping and eating only at the most vaunted five-star hotels, while—and here's where it gets scary—maintaining the budget of a publishing intern. In November, I decide to go millionairing in Southeast Asia. • The currency crisis of fifteen months before has been

● written and photographed by douglas cooper credited with an eruption of good local buys, but many think these are restricted to the mid-priced hotels and backpacker bungalows; conventional wisdom maintains that wild values are not to be found at the five-star properties. If you want a bargain, you'll have to settle for a squat toilet, and malaria.

Sorry, but I don't believe it. I intend to spend a few days in the finest hotels in Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, and Bali. I first investigate one of the world's most lavish colonial hotels—the **Peninsula** (011-852-2920-2888), in Hong Kong.

I fly Cathay Pacific. Next to Singapore Airlines, this carrier is widely regarded as Asia's most luxurious. And in the wake of the economic crisis, it has been offering spectacular discounts. If you fly economy, you can sign up over the Internet for the All Asia Pass: $999 round trip, including 31 days of hopping about in Asia (www.cathay-usa.com).

Mightier Than the Pen

I am picked up at the new airport by a sleek, almost noiseless Rolls-Royce. Millionairing devotees will be pleased to note that this ride—90 bucks American—is hardly necessary. The new hypermodern Airport Express train can be faster, and it's just under $8.

The lobby of the Pen is justly famous: The limestone floor has been polished to a glasslike state. (Rollerblading is, unfortunately, discouraged.) The bronze fu dog guarding the elevators—a *feng shui* requirement—was sculpted by pop heart specialist Jim Dine.

I am met by a phalanx of devoted hotel employees, including May, who shows me to my room. May is typical of the unbelievable staff you find at hotels in this part of the world: When I turn up in the lobby over a month later, she remembers my name. She demonstrates the fax machine hidden beneath the burl desktop and informs me that there is a television in my bathroom, so that I "won't be boring."

My hexagonal bathroom is clad in marble, buff, and sea green. Angled mirrors multiply images to infinity. Soap reclines in tin boxes. My room features a padded wall behind the bed (should I go mad in my sleep) and elegant Chinese detailing: black lacquered lamps, rattan furniture, twin vases lit like a museum display.

My little chamber is a "superior" room—the lowest category—and the rack rate is U.S. $377 (quoted rates don't include tax). The Pen has very few merely superior rooms; book this class, and you stand a good chance of being upgraded. For the first time in history, this room has been discounted, although nobody will admit to it. The discount is hidden in a new $338 "no frills" package. I do some digging and discover that the no-frills label is a decoy. You don't miss out on a single frill. It's simply that the Peninsula is embarrassed about dropping the price.

My room features elegant Chinese detai

Should You Leave Your Exquisite Hotel Room

One place you'll save, if you're savvy, is on food. You'll want to dine at **Felix**, the most dramatic restaurant at the Pen. The design is Philippe Starck at his most inspired; the special elevator makes you feel as if you're riding up inside the trunk of a baobab tree. If you are millionairing, investigate the early-bird special: From 6 to 7 P.M., the restaurant offers a three-course prix fixe menu at $32 (less than the price of most entrées at eight o'clock), including sea bass marinated in ginger and a stellar tirami su.

The finest detail at Felix is the row of freestanding urinals in the men's room. They stand, like expensive vases, in front of a floor-to-ceiling picture window with one of the most spectacular views in the city. It's hard to decide whether you're being a voyeur or an exhibitionist.

But we were discussing food. Many of the top hotels, in fact, have quietly introduced cheap menus. The **Kowloon Shangri-la** (011-852-2721-2111) has a Japanese restaurant favored by expats from Tokyo, and a prix fixe lunch of multiple tiny courses is less than $12. At the same hotel, the **Shang Palace** has been heralded as the top Cantonese dining room in Hong Kong (and, therefore, the world). The set lunch is also under 12 bucks and features shark's-fin soup, three kinds of dim sum, greens with oyster sauce, a noodle or rice dish, and dessert.

Hip, not particularly pricey restaurant cluster in SoHo ("South of Hollywoo Road"), which has eclipsed Lan Kwa Fang as the hot spot. I have drinks at th **Pavilion** and dine at **Manchu Bistro** on Elgi Street; you might also want to check ou **Two Sardines**, the **Bayou** (for Cajun food) and the **Staunton Bar and Cafe**.

I have a shirt made at **Rashmi Custom Tailor** (011-2311-5362). The tailor want $47, but I've been in training for this moment: $39, and yes, I want the superio Egyptian cotton. Later I find a place tha will do shirts for $26, but the qualit doesn't thrill me. My new shirt is th finest I've owned. I feel almost airbrushed. If I'd ordered from one of th famous Hong Kong tailors—say, **Ascot Chang** in the Pen—prices would've started at $65, but the end product might have turned me into a thing of rare beauty.

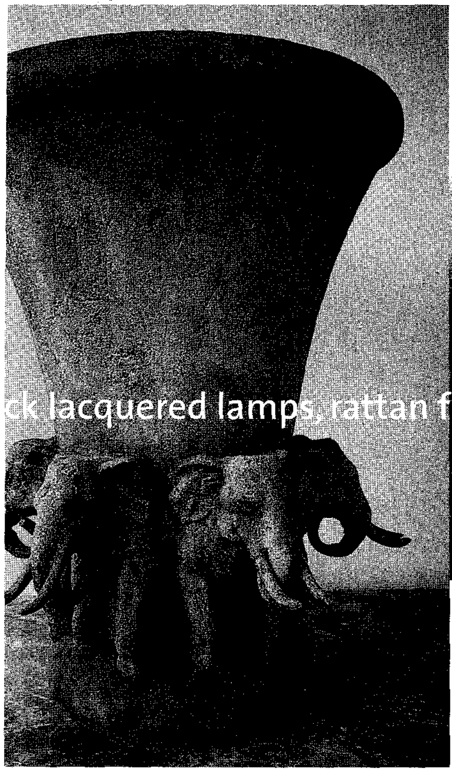
Thai Games

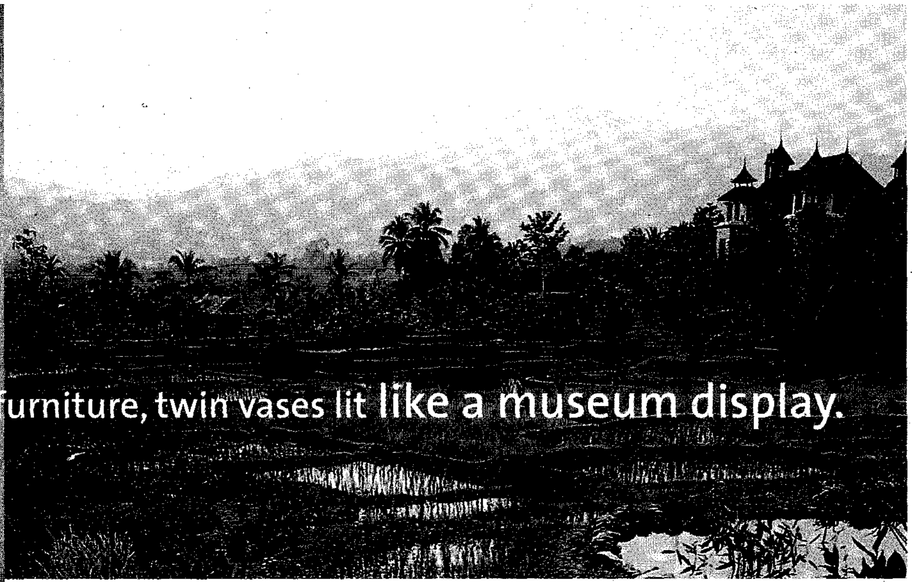
I leave the Peninsula with regret, but not much—I'm about to stay at a property widely considered the most exquisite hotel in the world. Bangkok is the city of superlative hotels, and the very finest, according to the major travel magazines, is the legendary **Oriental** (011-662-236-0400). All my life I've wanted to spend a few nights in the Oriental in Bangkok.

And for the rest of my life, I'll wonder why.

The Oriental, like Raffles, in Singapore, trades heavily on its literary reputation. A young Joseph Conrad stayed here, as did Somerset Maugham; a whole section has been named "The Author's Lounge." Most New Yorkers, however, have lived in close proximity to famous ghosts. I occupied a brownstone on 10th Street, upstairs from the shade of Marcel Duchamp; a few doors away slept the translucent Mark Twain. If you want to impress a New Yorker, you'll have to promise more than an encounter with the dead. And frankly, the Oriental doesn't offer much more than this. My "superior" room ($250, down from $270) is dim and kind of ugly: The traditional Thai detailing merely serves to darken and depress. The bathroom is large enough, but the fluorescent fixtures don't quite compete with the Peninsula's "mood light." The lobby—much photographed—lies beneath dramatic ornamental bells and may be marginally more authentic than most, but I'm not sleeping in the lobby.

The most elegant sector of the Oriental is the spa, a one-minute boat ride across the Chao Phya river. If the entire hotel had been designed with such attention to detail, I'd understand the fuss. Each massage room, lined in dark wood, features a glorious private shower with a gigantic showerhead that emulates a monsoon. The massage itself is nicely brutal, rivaling the Swedish massage I received at the new Clarins spa in the Pen. A 60-minute massage is $38; four years ago it was $48.





ck lacquered lamps, rattan furniture, twin vases lit like a museum display.

Left to right, the labyrinthine pool at the Banyan Tree in Phuket; indigenous art at the Bangkok Peninsula; the extravagantly landscaped Regent Chiang Mai, where Madeleine Albright didn't quite stay.

But you don't have to stay at the hotel to experience this; the Oriental's spa is open to hoi polloi. You might stay at a hotel right beside the spa, just opened by—you guessed it—the Peninsula Group. The standard of finish at the **Bangkok Peninsula** is similar to the Hong Kong Pen—the bathrooms are precisely the same—but the lobby and public spaces are less luminous. (Thai architecture in general favors darkness.) All rooms have river views, and the view itself is preferable to the one from the other direction: It's like seeing Manhattan from Brooklyn Heights. Many have expressed reservations about this hotel—it's considered to be on the "wrong" side—but I disagree. Crossing the river never loses its thrill. Ah, and the price. This year, you can take advantage of various packages concocted to celebrate its opening—a "superior" room is down from $240 to $175.

The wily millionairist will stay at the new Pen, get rubbed down at the Oriental spa, and have lunch at the Oriental's Thai buffet next door at the **Sala Rim Naam**—a truly spectacular spread, and a fantastic bargain at $12.

Another alternative, if you don't mind staying somewhere a bit removed from the river, is the **Sukhothai Hotel** (011-662-287-0222). Insiders have long preferred the Sukhothai to its more hyped brethren. Part of the reason is the design—vaguely Asian, but not so specific that you could easily guess what part of Asia you're in. It's all very lovely: a sophisticated business hotel in teak and granite, served up with a dash of Asian fusion. The building's exterior is nothing to get excited about, but the best rooms open onto an interior court, planted to resemble a rice paddy. The unbelievably expansive bathrooms have teak floors and oversize bathtubs. This hotel caters mostly to men in suits—the location is handy to the city center, if less dramatic than the river bank. But I would happily stay there as a tourist. A superior room is $230; suites start at $320.

If you like the Thai statuary that punctuates the public spaces, you can visit the **Fine Arts** shop, just off the lobby. The shop is one of the few places you can feel safe buying antiques in Bangkok. The Fine Arts has the ambience of a museum and offers authenticated pieces from $350 to $450,000. The savings—40 to 60 percent—are substantial in the wake of the currency crisis. Most important—since Bangkok is lousy with forgeries—this shop stands firmly behind its merchandise; if you take a three-ton Buddha home and have it carbon-dated, you won't be unpleasantly surprised (and if you are, Fine Arts will take it back).

YOU'RE WONDERING ABOUT THAT ALBINO water buffalo. Was I lying? Did I indeed enjoy a schvitz with Dame Albright's goons? Patience—we're getting there.

If you're going to travel to northern Thailand, you don't have many choices when it comes to superior hotels. In fact, you have one—the **Regent Chiang Mai** (011-6653-298-181), in Chiang Mai. This area has traditionally appealed mostly to backpackers en route to the Golden Triangle, where they smoke opium with village headmen before being shot by Burmese renegades. The Regent offers a somewhat different experience.

I have never, in more than a decade of travel writing, encountered a hotel as lavishly landscaped as the Regent Chiang Mai. The hotel has managed to re-create a vast rice field, complete with farmers, pavilions (in which you will sleep), and highly convincing water buffalo. One of these buffalo is a nice pink albino.

Madeleine Albright never makes it to the Regent; Saddam Hussein has other plans for her. Her advance personnel, however, have already staked the place out, and I have an engaging conversation with them over beer in the open-air Jacuzzi. They aren't actually goons, by the way—they're nice, intelligent, clean-cut guys (who could probably take you out with a single blow to the solar plexus).

If I were secretary of State, I would choose the Regent. I would certainly choose it over Saddam. The two-story pavilions open onto covered patios where you can eat breakfast. (Specify a room in the upper story; you'll get a high peaked ceiling and better light.) The food is ordinary, and pricey; the spa, however, is charming. As is the tennis pro. And there's an infinity pool! Also known as a "knife-edge pool," this feature tends to turn up at high-end hotels in Southeast Asia. The sidewalls extend only to the surface of the water, which flows over the edge, so that the pool appears to be contained by nothing but air pressure, and the water seems to flow off into the sky.

Chiang Mai itself is a bit sleepy relative to Bangkok (hell, so is New York a bit sleepy), but it's worth a couple days. You don't have to remain at the mercy of the Regent's cuisine; much cheaper—and often better—restaurants can be found in the ancient town. Check out the **Gallery**, whose candlelit patio overlooks the river, or the pedestrian-looking **Arun Rai**, which serves the most authentic northern Thai cuisine. The exciting night market rivals Bangkok's floating markets for bargains in Thai crafts.

The Regent is by no means cheap, but various packages can reduce the overall cost. The Hideaway Package gives you a fourth night free if you pay for the first three. Rooms range from $320 to $365.

If you want a *real* bargain, purchase one of the residences built on the property; they were going for $880,000 before the baht fell, and now can be had for $600,000. (And perhaps less. Haggle.)

My next stop is the island of Phuket, which has been pretty thoroughly deracinated by tourists but where you'll find a couple of Thailand's most exotic hotels. Phuket is not the place to go millionairing these days: Tourists scared off by the violence in Djakarta have chosen it as a substitute for Bali, so occupancy at the major hotels has increased. (Bali, by the way, is far from Djakarta, and ludicrously safe.)

The most celebrated property in Phuket completely thwarts my competitive efforts: There are no discounts to be had at **Amanpuri** (011-6676-324-333). None. The Aman people, who run the most exclusive small hotels in the world, generally don't have trouble filling their bouquet of rooms, and they want you to pay through the nose.

Amanpuri does have its extraordinary features. If you approach at night, the dramatic lighting reflects off the burnished wood to create a quasi-religious effect. It has a lovely library, and a 24-hour business center. During the day, however, you notice the unsightly maze of elevated concrete walkways and the undeniable tininess of the property. The Italian restaurant hardly holds its own with Il Mulino, and the beach is unimpressive. Though someone is eternally replenishing the ice water in your insulated glass, it would be nice to have a beachside bar. The architecture is mostly winning—a riff on traditional Thai building customs, including walls and windows that slope inward as they rise—and the entire resort is oriented toward the View: a dramatic drop off a rocky precipice. Ordinary pavilions start at $480 and can rise to $1,070 during high season. And almost nothing is included: no meals, no significant activities, nothing. Still, among the things not included is a fleet of vessels—little ones, big ones—that you can charter to take you to the stunning inlets and natural formations nearby, such as Phangnga Bay (where a very peculiar carrot-shaped island was featured in *The Man With the Golden Gun*).

None of the Malaysian resorts has ra

Another resort, a short distance away, thrills me as much—for considerably less money. The **Banyan Tree** (011-6676-324-374), part of a constellation of high-end hotels, offers most of the charms of Amanpuri and has recently won all sorts of awards in the spa community. Check out www.banyantree.com for discounts: A garden villa is as low as $170; and the Garden Villa is as lovely as an Amanroom, even if the resort itself is laid out like a luxe suburb. The dramatic open lobby, minimal and vast, is almost as impressive as the jewellike Aman. The beach itself is superior, and the spa features a bizarre swimming pool that twists in a labyrinth of forking lanes. Massages are given in the open air, in covered pavilions—very nice until someone begins mowing the lawn a few feet away.

The restaurants at the Banyan Tree—Thai, Italian, and seafood—are terrific. If you really want to save money, however, a superb café is located in the mall five minutes away by shuttle: the **Albatross Cafe and Pub**, where a Western breakfast or Thai lunch can be had for about $3.

My last stop in Thailand is on Koh Samui, very recently a backpacker island but quickly becoming the next Phuket. The most swish hotel is **Le Royal Meridien Baan Taling Ngam** (011-6677-423-019-22), built into a cliff face in a remote part of the southeast shore and offering panoramic views of the water below. The beach is drab, but the infinity pool is impressive, its multisided, idiosyncratic form perching over a steep landscape. The **Lom Talay** restaurant is open at the sides, with a view into the Gulf of Thailand, and the Thai cuisine is superb, if not cheap: There's no reason to spend $30 on a Thai meal in Koh Samui, where local restaurants cost a third of that.

In rainy season, the hotel puts a laser-disc player in each room and offers a library of serious films. If it's not raining, take one of the day trips. They'll speed you in a boat to **Ang Thong Marine Park**, where you can snorkel in the archipelago as they prepare your barbecue lunch on the beach (half-day: $35). The Baan Taling Naam remains your best choice if you want five-star service in Koh Samui: You can still bargain, especially in the off-season. November, for instance, can get quite rainy; a $300 room can be had for $200.

Yes, You Do Want to Go to Malaysia

If Thailand, where it's almost impossible to find high-end bargains, is the killer hill in the millionairing Tour de France, Malaysia is the bunny slope. It's generally considered unsafe—a fiction fostered by CNN, who would have you believe there are riots in the streets of Kuala Lumpur—so things look up as soon as I cross the border.

Consider the **Datai** (011-604-263-5112), on the island of Langkawi. Every little detail from the handrails to the wall sconces has been designed to within an inch of its life, with excellent taste. Each deluxe room contains a king-size bed, a daybed, and a huge bathing-and-dressing area finished in local marble and balau. The beach is glorious, the spa the most inventive I've yet experienced: They cure me for an hour like a piece of smoked meat, rubbing me and cleaning me and wrapping me up with deep-heating spices before massaging my body into a blissful coma. The service here rivals that of the best Thai hotels—no mean feat in Malaysia. The Datai is as perfect and urbane as you might wish, yet it's still very much a jungle property: Monkeys threaten to trash your room should you leave the balcony doors open, and the world's longest snake—the reticulated python, a personal favorite—lounges somewhere in the rain forest behind you. Here it is absolutely crucial to take one of the scheduled treks, not simply for the terrain, which includes plants that curl up shyly when you touch them, but for the guide, a truly knowledgeable banker turned ecologist.

Okay, so how much is this going to set you back? Well, the Datai quotes in Malaysian ringgit, among the world's most battered currencies—once 2.4 to the dollar, the ringgit is now 3.8—and a deluxe room that went for $435 a couple of years ago is $275. None of the Malaysian resorts I visit, by the way, has raised its rates to counteract the absurd bargain the rooms have now become. Yet.

But if you really want a jungle experience—à la Sheena, the Queen of—you really should consider **Pangkor Laut** (011-605-699-1100), which occupies its own private island. Some of the pavilions stand on stilts off the beach; mine is nestled next to the rain forest, with giant hornbills calling in the morning and macaques playing on my roof. The service here is refreshingly lax, to complement the environment.

I particularly like **Uncle Lim's Kitchen**. The roof looks like an oversize wooden umbrella, and the dining-room floor wraps around a huge boulder. The food is Malaysian-Chinese fare, with Thai and Indian influences.

I spend the morning hiking though the jungle, and the afternoon reading beside the infinity pool, where a peacock strolls among the sunbathers. Pangkor Laut has something unquantifiable—hominess. I just like the place. There's a real scene around the bar at night, in contrast to anything I experienced at the high-end properties in Thailand. The rates have not gone up: a room on stilts (the most desirable standard room) is $275. It would have been more than $400.

In Bali, a room with a real view at the Amankila (left), and the Chedi's take on the ubiquitous infinity pool (below).

rates to counteract the absurd bargain the rooms have become. Yet.

And You Might Prefer Kuala Lumpur

Kuala Lumpur gets a bad rap. It's never been considered much of a tourist destination, and most recently it's been likened to Kent State on a bad day. Truth is, you may witness a quiet demonstration. But you certainly won't feel threatened, especially if you stay at the magisterial **Carcosa Seri Negara** (011-603-282-1888), a pair of mansions quietly ensconced in the middle of a great park. This hotel is run by the Aman group, although it's quite a departure from the New Agey Amanresorts: It's a stately colonial property with absurdly high ceilings and rooms large enough to play Frisbee in. The Carcosa is a Gothic mansion; the Seri Negara, next door, is more Victorian folly. Only the swimming pool is disappointing—I've seen larger plunge pools—but even this seems appropriate for a property with these sorts of pretensions: It's hard to see the queen (who stayed here recently) getting much of a frisson from an infinity pool. You should put in at least one night in K.L. if you're off to the jungles: *Huge* rooms here start at $280 (down from $400).

Penang, She Sang

Penang, like Phuket in Thailand, is a backpacker island that recently caught the eye of developers, with predictably dire results. Still, bits of Penang have yet to be ruined, and the island, unlike Phuket, remains a place of cultural significance: a largely Chinese spot in the midst of a Malay nation.

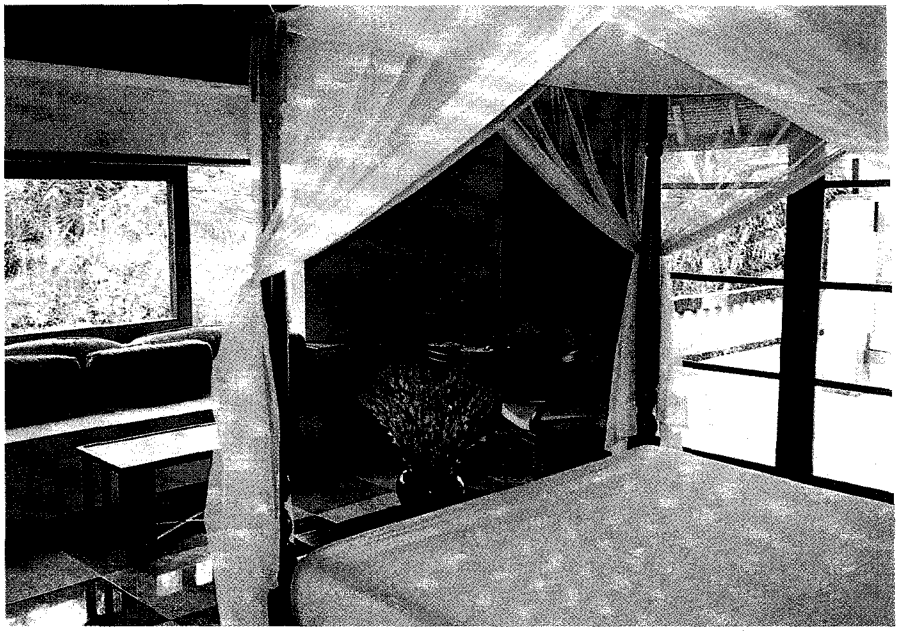
The **Shangri-la's Rasa Sayang** (011-604-881-1811) is the top resort, and a couple of decades ago it was *the* place in Malaysia. It was, however, built in the seventies, which means you don't get an infinity pool; you get a free-form pool, in the shape of an amoeba. Still, if you don't mind that your hotel matches your bell-bottoms, the Rasa Sayang is a great bargain. For the price of an ordinary room at the Datai, you can get a vast suite in Penang ($286). Rasa Sayang occupies fifteen acres on Batu Ferringhi, the nicest beach in Penang—two and a half miles long and now clogged with resorts, but if you like the carnival atmosphere of hawkers and Jet-Skis, you'll get a kick out of it. An alternative is the more sedate and generic **Shangri-la** in George Town; it's a business hotel, a good half-hour from the beach, but it's the finest hotel in the colonial capital, which is a destination in its own right. The standard ("superior") room at the Shangri-la is $143 for a double, but you should be able to bargain.

Play Bali

Bali, like Malaysia, is being shunned for all the wrong reasons. A lone traveler is in considerably more danger on the Upper East Side. Bali is a Hindu island parked in the middle of a Muslim nation, and its politics are continents removed. You won't find a more pacific people.

But I am here for a very shallow reason. I just want to find a brilliant hotel, cheap. And, if I may say so, I succeed in virtuosic ways.

The success of the Amanresorts—there are three in Bali, and one on a nearby island—has given rise to a couple of surprisingly congenial clones. At the **Chedi** (011-62-361-975-963), I encounter the most dramatic infinity pool yet: a slab of unbounded water reaching out across a ravine. The Chedi was designed by Kerry Hill Architects, who also gave us the Sukhothai and the Datai. The detailing is derived equally from Frank Lloyd Wright and shelter-magazine porn. Wood and concrete, with unglazed porcelain accents, blend effortlessly with an absurdly growy landscape.



At Amandari, the villas are hidden behind medieval stone walls. You can st

The standard ("deluxe") room is $230, and much smaller than the standard room at an Amanresort; it is minimally furnished in coconut wood and midnight blue, with stone floors and terra-cotta planters. But for $390 you can rent one of the four lavish suites: twin pavilions, connected by an outdoor patio where a stone bathtub floats in a private fish pool. All rooms have a dramatic view of the river valley below; and the suites even come with binoculars. Discounts are often available: A good travel agent can get you a suite for $330.

Dante's Resort

The **New Four Seasons Resort** at Sayan (011-62-361-977-577), near Ubud, is simply bizarre. The architect, John Heah, has decided to build the inverse of a high-rise: It's a hotel that descends. An elevated ramp takes you to the entrance at the building's top, which is a lily pond sitting in a huge suspended bowl—and beneath the pond you wind down into the elliptical hotel itself. The hallways are dark and wet, lined with curving, moss-encrusted walls and shallow pools. This hotel is nothing if not dramatic. Even the villas descend into the landscape: A thatched hut covers a small patio, and you have to climb down a spiral staircase to see the hidden villa itself.

I prefer the standard rooms, the Terrace Suites, off the mossy hallway: They're smaller, but they're on two floors, with two-story cathedral windows offering latticed views into the garden. The villas have a new take on the ubiquitous infinity pool: *private* infinity plunge pools. If you book a standard room (the Terrace Suite), you'll save a bundle: The villas start at $525; the bi-level suites are $375 and are at least as lavish as the villas at most other properties: They have separate sitting and dining areas, guest toilets, terraces, and museumlike displays of local objects lit in tiny wall openings. None of this constitutes a stellar bargain, especially compared to the Chedi, but the quality of the public spaces is finer, and there's more to the resort, including a gym and an outdoor Jacuzzi.

Que Serai, Serai

The **Serai** (62-363-41011), in Candidasa, is the second of the Amanclones I visit, this one cheaper even than the Chedi (and, frankly, that much less luxurious). This property, too, was designed by Kerry Hill. Here, at the firm's most minimal resort—it's nominally a four-star—we get to see what they can do in Miesian mode.

The Serai is, for the most part, a success. The pool is just fine, the public spaces predictably gorgeous, and the rooms spare but tasteful. What sets the Serai apart is its culinary mission. The resident manager, Steve Baker, is also the head chef—which ought to give a clue to the priorities here. Baker has set up a garden to grow herbs and raise free-range chickens, and he teaches a serious course in Balinese cooking at the hotel. The restaurant reflects his obsession: He has put together an ambitious fusion menu and is intent upon making the Serai into Bali's principal culinary destination. A standard room is a joke at $130; the five-day cooking school is $625.

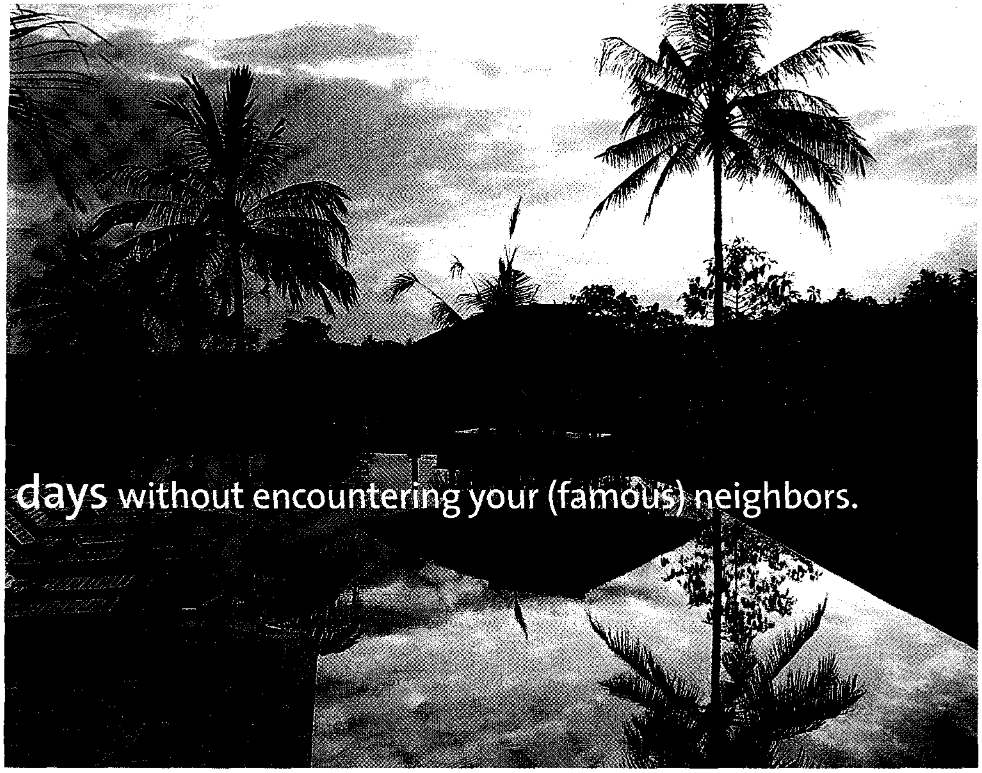
For around $3,000, you can experience all three Balinese Amanresorts, including the elegant Amanusa and the verdant Amandari.

A third property run by GHM, the people who own the Chedi and the Serai, is quite a departure from the intimate Amanfeel. The **Legian** (011-62-361-730-622), a tall hotel of stacked suites, is on the most spectacular beach in Bali (the civilized portion west of Kuta). If you were planning on living in a hotel for some time, this would be your choice. The rooms are monstrous, and finished to a more luxurious degree than those of the Chedi; you could raise a family in one of these suites. The landscaping is theatrical, if strange: Staircases lead up to tall stone doorways framing the sun; it's all a bit Druidic. Still, for a five-star experience on the island, the Legian is probably the best deal going: Rooms start at $250.

If you really intend to live in Bali for a bit, however, you might consider renting a villa. Lynley Marston, a well-connected expat, rents private villas to the likes of Oliver Stone, Elle Macpherson, and Eurosociety. These villas have become something of a bargain since the currency crisis: A three-bedroom villa in Seminyak that was $450 would be $350 now. (Call 011-62-361-731-074.) The villas come with a staff (as do all private homes in Bali), so you'll have your own chef, maid, and gardener. Most are located in the luxury areas of Legian and Sanur.

Three Aman Resorts, Two Turtle Doves . . .

Each of the three Amans on Bali is quite different from the others, and if you visit all three, you are in a unique position to actually *get a discount from the Aman-people!* Don't underestimate the rarity of this occurrence. Because Bali is hurting, Aman offers the Bali Experience, a seven-night package that includes all three Balinese resorts, airport transfer, and champagne. All this for $3,000 if you don't require a private pool (the rooms alone would be $3,500 if booked separately); the package with a pool suite is $4,400.



Amandari (011-62-361-975-333), like the Chedi and the Four Seasons Sayan, is near the so-called cultural capital of Ubud; **Amankila** (011-62-363-41-333) is on the east coast, in Candidasa; and **Amanusa** (011-62-361-772-333) is in the highly developed and gardened tourist district of Nusa Dua.

A note on Ubud: I say "so-called" cultural capital because this town has unfortunately gone the way of all artists' colonies. Apparently once an intriguing nexus between East and West, it is now rife with execrable painting—obscene flowers and verdant nudes—and populated by aggressive locals pushing the most mercenary form of cultural encounter.

Amandari is a fine retreat from the sham bohemianism of Ubud. The oldest of the Amanresorts on Bali, it was built by traditional stonemasons using authentic materials and plans, and things grow so quickly here that it has taken on the green patina of a ruin. This is the place that started it all: Amandari pioneered the infinity pool, and theirs is still one of the world's great tubs. Amandari is most of all a brilliant choice if you want to be alone with someone. The villas are hidden behind a medieval labyrinth of stone walls, and you can expect to stay here for days without encountering your (often famous) neighbors.

Bali—and especially the vicinity of Ubud—offers the world's most exquisite handcrafted furniture, at low prices. Decorators from L.A. and the Caribbean routinely ship containers full of the stuff around the world. When you visit Ubud, the Amandari folk will give you expert advice regarding shops and what to buy.

Amankila is more social than the walled Amandari, with a whole new take on the unbounded swimming experience: the Cascading Infinity Trough. Three long pools, terraced into a cliff, overflow into each other. Unlike Amandari, which is landlocked, Amankila also has a beach, although it's a bit of a hike. Just up from the beach, there's a massage grove: a cluster of trees where you can get traditional Balinese rubdowns. The rooms and public spaces are not to my liking: The fancy arches framing mirrors remind me too much of Indian restaurants. The property is planned in a way reminiscent of Amanpuri: Too much of the resort is taken up by unsightly raised walkways, and everything is oriented toward the View.

On the other hand, Amankila does have its signal features. Two young girls from a local village greet you earnestly with floral offerings; everyone knows your name within minutes; the entire resort smells of frangipani and ylang-ylang (which is what the roof is woven with). I, in fact, develop a slight allergy to my hotel room, but it is worth it. A private boat will take you snorkeling in Blue Lagoon; the underwater life in this part of Bali is worth visiting (full day: $300).

The third Amanresort gets less attention than these two, mostly because it's associated with Nusa Dua, a famously overdeveloped and inauthentic bit of the island. It is more manicured than either of the other Amans, and it sits beside a vast golf course. The public spaces are truly regal, including a polished floor in the lobby that can hold its own, mirrorwise, with the Hong Kong Pen's, and an Italian restaurant whose splendid design puts Amanpuri's to shame. The pool is merely finite, but it is impressively huge and girded by monolithic structures out of some Mayan fantasy. The beach, though a five-minute drive away, is pretty and unpopulated.

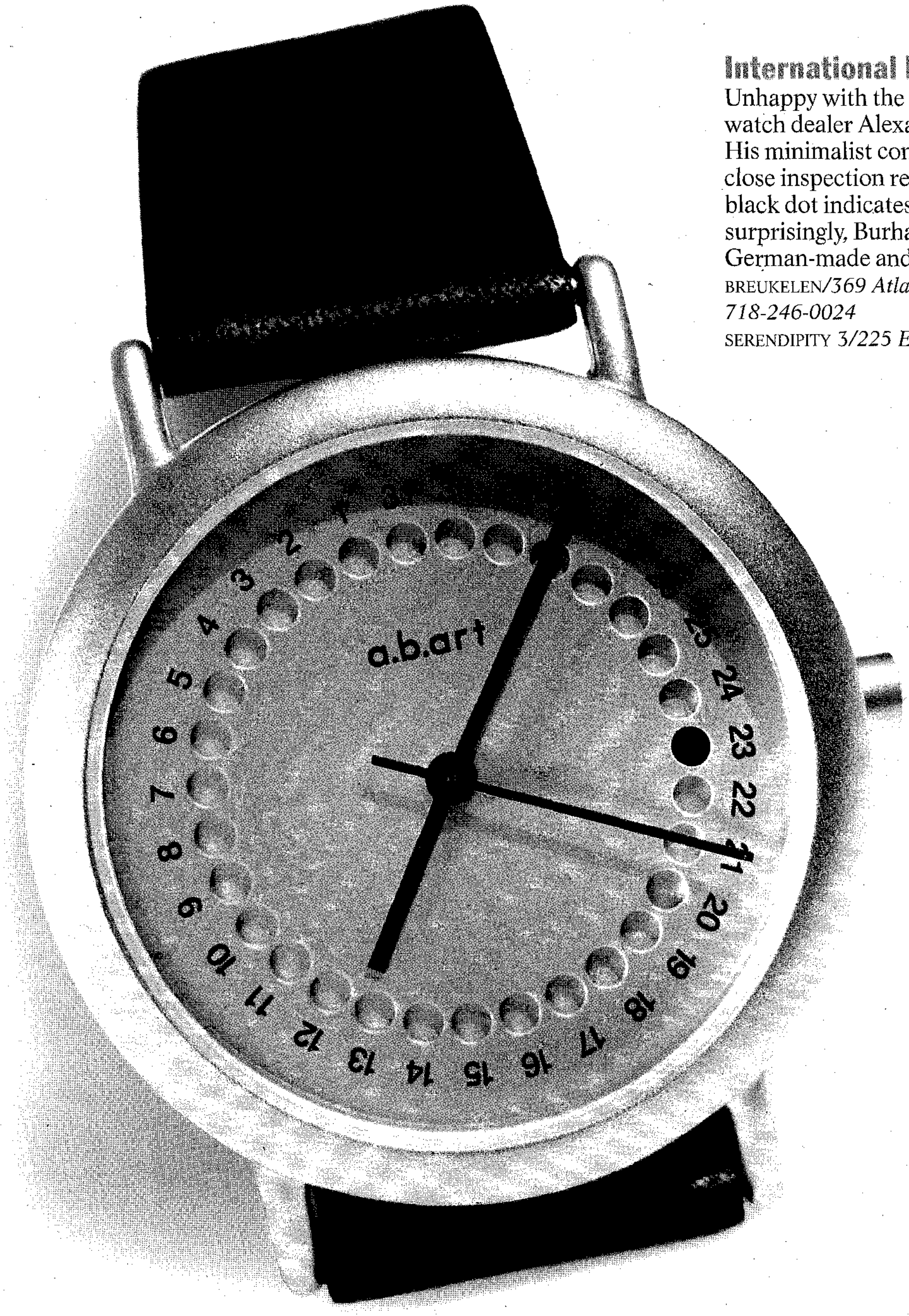
Amandari is my favorite, not least because it's the only Aman with a gym. It would be terrible if you booked the wrong Aman and spent your entire vacation seething with envy; luckily, with the Bali Experience, you don't have to choose.

Forget the albino buffalo and the Albright posse. *This* I consider the millionairing equivalent of a quadruple toe loop with a half-gainer: a trio of Amanresorts, occupied on a week of successive evenings, for peanuts. (Well, okay, macadamias.) This is the kind of coup that the sport's many fans recount over beer toward the bleary hours of dawn. And as I rise to the podium to accept my medal, I would just like to say: I am the king of the world. You like me, you really like me. And no, I don't see why I should have to submit to a urine test. ■

BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible citie

BY CORKY POLLA

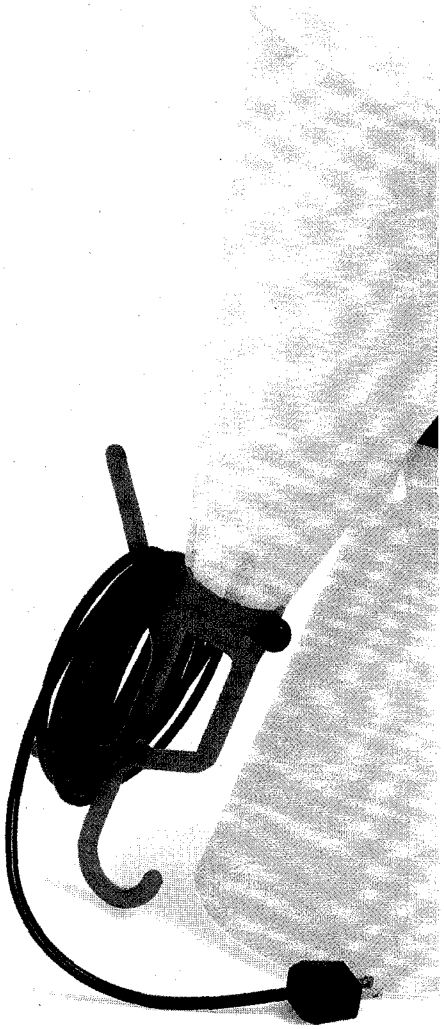


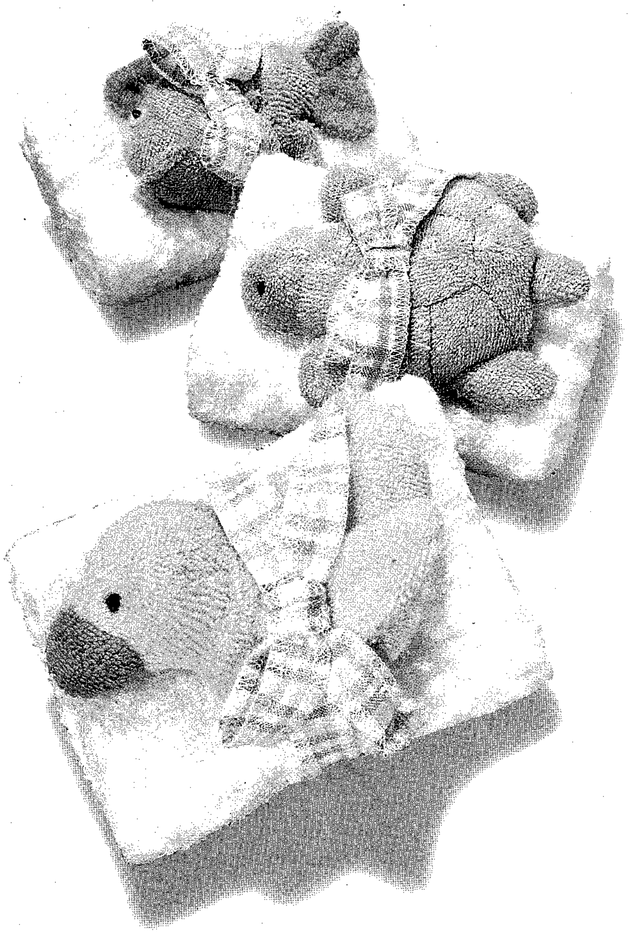
International Date Line

Unhappy with the quality of affordable timepieces, former watch dealer Alexander Burhans became a watchmaker. His minimalist contribution looks deceptively simple, but close inspection reveals a unique date display: a rotating black dot indicates the date as it circles the watch face. Not surprisingly, Burhans calls his timepiece the Orbit. It's German-made and has a Swiss quartz movement ($170).

BREUKELEN/*369 Atlantic Avenue, near Hoyt Street, Brooklyn/ 718-246-0024*

SERENDIPITY 3/*225 East 60th Street/838-3531*



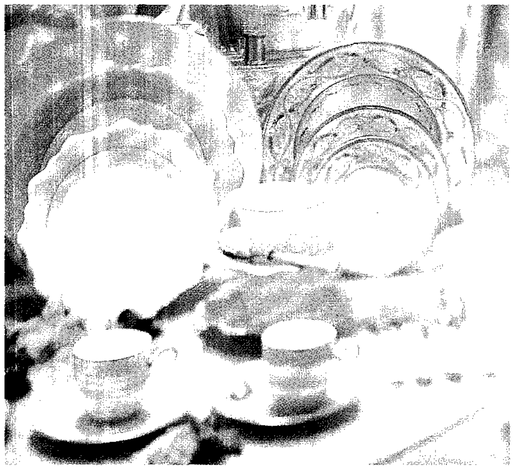


Bathing Cuties

Russ's cute little bundles promise to eliminate those bath-time battles. Kids get to play with the tiny terry-cloth finger puppets while parents scrub away. There's a duck, a turtle, and a fish, and each comes with its own soft cotton-terry washcloth ($10).
BARK/*369 Atlantic Avenue, near Hoyt Street, Brooklyn/718-625-8997*

Light Heavyweight

It solves most lighting problems, so Flos USA has tagged it May-Day: Indoors it's a hanging lamp or a portable table lamp, outdoors, a lantern or a searchlight. Konstantin Grcic, the German designer, is best known for inventive furniture, but recently he's expanded into plastic homewares and now clever lighting. The white polypropylene shade has a hooked handle so it can clip onto a branch or a chain, and a sixteen-foot plug-in cord eliminates the need for costly installation ($95; handle in these colors, plus blue and green).
MOSS/*146 Greene Street/226-2190*



A Member of the Wedding

These days, every department store and tabletop emporium has a bridal registry. What sets the Wedding List Company apart is that this branch of a London establishment has filled an entire townhouse with gift items and staffed it with professionals intent on transforming the registry experience from nightmarish to fun. There's a parlor (stocked with formal Limoges, Wedgewood, Royal Worcester, and all the other posh names in china, glassware, and silver), a library (crowded with bookish stuff, barware, and games), a kitchen (with the best in culinary essentials), and a bed-sitting room (outfitted with splendid linens, blankets, luggage, and countryish china). In this quiet setting—over a Perrier, a glass of wine, or a Scotch—soon-to-be-marrieds can see and handle everything they'll need for setting up their home. And since the shop offers both the usual and the unusual (some fine English antiques and one-of-a-kind items gathered from forays around the world), even the long-married will find lots of temptations here. (From $20 for a frame to $125 for horn-and-silver salad servers to $194 for an oversize Simon Pearce bowl to $399 for a cashmere throw to $800 for a pair of nineteenth-century Sheffield silver wine coasters.)
THE WEDDING LIST CO./*29 East 73rd Street/988-6166/Appointment recommended for registering*

Photographs: left to right, Michael Grimm (2); Steve Wisbauer (1); Robert Wright (2).

NEW YORK SIMPLIFIED

SMARTCITY

Beefing Up

Our search for the best new burgers led us to five chefs who give the sandwich everyone takes for granted the respect it deserves. **BY ROB PATRONITE**

THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE that the worst places serve the best burgers: a sad-sack lunch counter, say, with a single review from 1979 in the window, or a darkened dive whose age-old technique amounts to a grill with a half-century's accumulation of "flavor-enhancing" grease. A proper burger establishment, according to this theory, should fit certain criteria: Is smoking prohibited, except in the case of the cook? Is the floor the original linoleum? Is the waitperson a character? A good part of this humble sandwich's appeal, it would seem, is its even humbler surroundings.

Maybe that's why the last place many of us would think to order a killer burger, charred and juicy and satisfyingly tactile, is in a restaurant where waiters replace your starched linen napkin every time you leave the table. The kind of place where you'd feel ashamed to ask for ketchup, much less eat with your hands. But to overlook three-star stoves or anyplace that doesn't serve a burger on a paper plate or in a plastic mesh basket in the quest for burger greatness would be ill-advised; it's hardest, after all, to do the simplest things well, which might explain why some of New York's best new burgers are turning up on some suspiciously upmarket menus. In spite of the plush surroundings and attentive service of the restaurants listed below, it's possible to order a burger and feel as at ease as you would at your neighborhood coffee shop (well, at least until the check arrives). And there's also the subversive pleasure of chowing down on elevated diner food while everyone around you, regretful of those delicate plates of baby vegetables, looks on in primordial envy.

Burger heaven: City Hall's top-notch mix of brisket, sirloin, and filet reinvigorates the classic sandwich.

Michael Jordan's The Steakhouse NYC

Grand Central Terminal (655-2300)

Just because a restaurant is named for an athlete doesn't make it a sports bar. This is the somewhat touchy message the proprietors of Michael Jordan's have been sending out since last summer, when the tastefully understated space opened on the balcony of the lavishly restored Grand Central Terminal. There are no TVs, no Buffalo wings, no draught beer, no wait staff hired away from Hooters. (And, naïve fans will be sad to discover, no Michael.) Instead there are cushy club chairs, friendly waiters in train-porter attire, warm lighting, and a simple and elegant design. So it's kind of surprising that you can get a burger—or, as the menu semi-disguises it, chopped sirloin—here at all. But chef David Walzog's hamburger ($16.95), as awe-inspiring as the view of the main concourse, rises to the occasion. And *rises* is the operative word: Walzog starts with sixteen ounces (that's four quarter-pounders, for the kitchen-math-challenged) of prime Nebraskan corn-fed sirloin ground

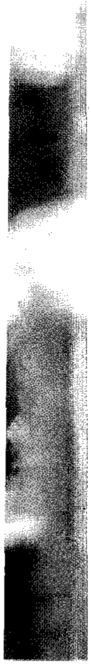
EXPERT TESTIMONY

Letterhead Revisited

When you're a socialite like Nan Kempner, personal stationery isn't just for the occasional thank-you note—it's one of your primary means of expression. Engraved invitations, personal letterhead, and menus are all done for Mrs. Kempner at Tiffany & Co. (100 note cards with envelopes, $326; wedding-invitation set for 100, $1,017). "They do a fantastic job," notes New York's reigning hostess. "I've dealt with them for years, and they've taken care of all my stationery. It's very quick, and very personal." If even more personal attention is what you're after, you could also turn to Calligraphy Studios (100 Reade Street, 964-6007), which will, by hand, indite invitations with calligraphy (100 invitations, $700 and up), design your personal monogram ($485 and up), or create an entire "stationery wardrobe," which includes personalized letterhead, envelopes, calling cards, and note cards ($2,000 and up), as it has for clients like Natasha Richardson and Quincy Jones.

SAM GROBART

Photographs by John Kernick.



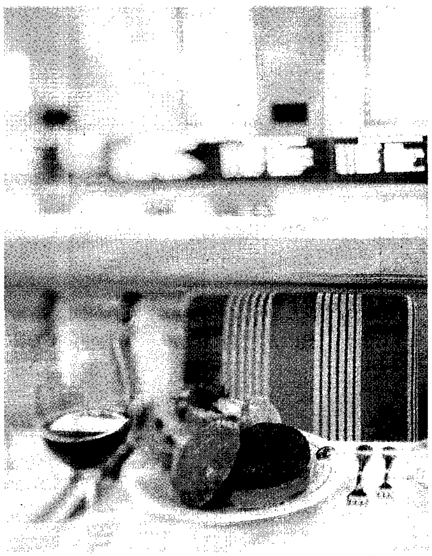
fresh daily to his specifications, simply seasons it with salt and pepper, and sears it in his 1,000-degree three-by-four-foot-deep broiler. The two-inch-thick, hand-shaped patty arrives at your table bulging and straining against its just-sturdy-enough poppy-seed brioche bun like a hulking Gambino soldier wearing a too-tight sport coat to a court appearance. The burger is beautifully charred on the outside, with a rich, beefy flavor. Melted Cheddar, ripe red and yellow tomato slices, red onion, crisp romaine, potently sour pickles, and thick, salty steak fries (for an extra $6.95) complete the act. "No, I can't save the world, by no means," M.J. sadly, half seriously informed us earlier this year at the press conference announcing his retirement, but at least he's making it a better place for burger lovers.

Bolivar

206 East 60th Street (838-0440)

Before chef Larry Kolar started cooking at Bolivar, the trendy new South Americanized cantina that replaced Arizona 206, he ventured to Peru and Argentina to research cooking techniques for seviches and arepas. But when it came to something as sacrosanct as his hamburger ($14), he traveled back in time, to his childhood in Chicago, to steal his own mother's recipe, borrowing some secret ingredients such as chopped onions and that all-time burger best friend, Heinz ketchup. Kolar one-ups the family formula by importing range-fed Argentine sirloin, grinding it daily, and grilling it over virgin sugar-maple wood. Although the burger, served on a semolina bun, has an all-American heritage, Kolar's savory Latino garnishes and condiments (criolla onions in a lime-juice-and-serrano-peppers marinade, parsley-flecked chimichurri sauce, pickled garlic) give it a delectable foreign flair. Even the accompanying potato chips are distinctive, with their spicy seasoning of cinnamon, cayenne pepper, paprika, and caraway.

Bun on the run: Michael Jordan's provides the weary traveler with a satisfying pit stop.



City Hall

131 Duane Street (227-7777)

Red-meat types will feel welcome at City Hall—not the mayor's office but the wonderfully updated Old New York–style steakhouse located in a newly renovated cast-iron building in TriBeCa. Sink into one of the ultra-comfy booths, restrain yourself from finishing the basket of plump onion rolls, and check out the backlit display of Old New York photos, acquired from the Museum of the City of New York, that border the room. The image of the battalion of chunky hotel chefs "exercising" on a rooftop is portentous, especially if you're there for chef-owner Henry Meer's Cheddar burger ($9.50), our favorite, and his heaping portions of hearty steak fries and curried onion rings. (Just remember to wait an hour before engaging in strenuous activity.) Meer's brilliant deviation from an otherwise straightforward burger technique is adding brisket to the freshly-ground-on-premises mix of chuck, filet mignon, and sirloin trimmings. "The brisket adds juice," he says. Actually, it adds a lot of juice. Biting into a City Hall burger is like biting into a ripe peach, albeit one with an enticing, meaty aroma, a nicely caramelized, sea-salted exterior, and a distinctive wood-grilled taste, a sandwich so addictively rich and satisfying the chef restricts it to his lunch menu. "Otherwise," he says, "we'd sell nothing but hamburgers." Children, however, are allowed to order burgers anytime, which makes them the ultimate meal ticket; let them place the order, then tell them the Backstreet Boys are signing autographs over by the bar and dig in.

Patroon

160 East 46th Street (883-7373)

To those Judgment Day–is–coming critics of our city, there may be no surer

(continued on page 60)

NAVIGATOR

Q: I dread looking for a new apartment. Any thoughts on how I can make my life a little easier?

A: Before pounding the pavement, surf the Web. Browsing online listings will give you a sense of what current prices are like in your area, and unlike the classifieds (or some brokers), most real-estate Websites filter out apartments that don't match your specified size, price range, and neighborhood. Many sites include floor plans and photos to help you decide in advance whether a place is worth a visit. And some sites, like nyrealty.com, let you check out recent sale prices in particular Manhattan buildings. Brokers say Internet real-estate shopping will soon be the norm. For now, there are enough quality sites to make it worth being an early adopter. Here are some of the more useful ones:

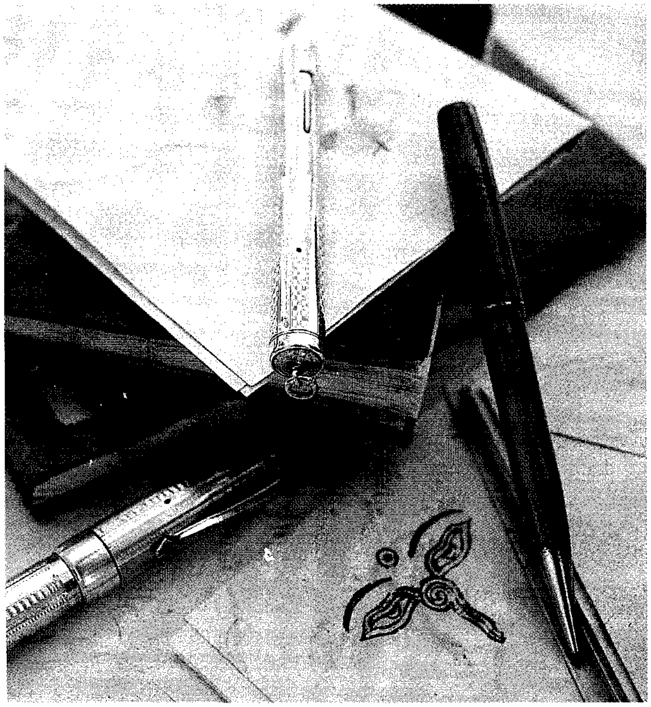
- **NewYorkRealty.com** (not to be confused with nyrealty.com) This is a giant network of resources, including many brokers and flat-fee apartment listers. Caveat emptor: No-fee apartment-list scams are rampant, so before you write a check to any of them, pay a visit to the Better Business Bureau's Website (NewYork.BBB.org) to see whether it has any marks on its record.
- **nyaptstore.com** The city's original purveyors of no-fee apartment lists, they now practically give their lists away—they do charge for a $40 mandatory credit report—in the hope of attracting more traffic to their site.
- **Apts-Illustrated.com** For a $250 broker's fee, they'll e-mail you the instant that one of their apartments becomes available. We looked over their listings and found a good range of prices and neighborhoods.
- **Homenet.com** Here you'll find links to prominent brokers like Corcoran, Stribling, Halstead, and Bellmarc and their databases of available apartments.
- **nycrgb.com** You can't shop for an apartment here, but the Rent Guidelines Board's Website contains plenty of useful advice on how to find a cheap apartment and a summary of tenant rights, along with links to all the local newspaper classifieds. MICHAEL STEELE

SALES & BARGAINS **SHYAMA PATEL**

The Paper Chase

S&B's **ink-stained wretch** *takes her gig very literally: Top-quality stationery and pens to bring out* **your inner writer.**

TIRED OF E-MAIL? OVER YOUR STAR-TAC? Try your hand at communication the old-fashioned, romantic way. Beautiful letter writing doesn't require high-tech gizmos, and a good pen can do wonders for handwriting. Highfalutin types stock up on gilded writing instruments, engraved stationery, and antique inkwells. But if you're serious about quality and not snob appeal, you'll need only pen and fine paper to make a lasting impression.



You've got mail: Charming if outdated word-processing hardware.

For a pen with character—and a free lesson on the history of writing instruments—stop by the **New York Pen Company.** Owner Max Davis will help you choose from a collection of vintage pens ranging in price from $39 for a red celluloid model from the forties to $175 for a silver ladies' Waterman from the twenties.

Prefer name brands? Don't get ripped off on a "gray market" fax machine; try the **Fountain Pen Hospital**, where a huge selection of haute pens from Parker, Montblanc, and Waterman is always discounted by 20 to 25 percent (discontinued styles are often 40 percent off).

The Nepalese rice paper that sells for up to $3 per sheet at fancy shops is much less at **Vision of Tibet**. A cheery folder stuffed with twenty rice-paper writing sheets and ten envelopes (either plain or stamped with the Buddhist "eyes of compassion" symbol) is $5. For special letters, a large sheet of flower-embedded handmade paper with a matching envelope is $1.50.

On a more whimsical note, stock up on quirky postcards from SoHo's **Untitled**. They're 75 cents each and filed in categories ranging from "Pulp Fiction" and "Diners" to "Rembrandt" and "Literature." Try a scene from *Winnie-the-Pooh* for a birthday card or an Irish-soda-bread recipe for a quick note. Leave time to wander—browsing is at least half the fun.

New York Pen Company, Chelsea Antiques Building, 110 West 25th Street, Shop 307 (243-7090); Fountain Pen Hospital, 10 Warren St. (800-253-PENS); Untitled, 159 Prince St. (982-2088); Vision of Tibet, 167 Thompson St. (995-9276).

ALWAYS A DEAL

Not-So-Dear Diaries

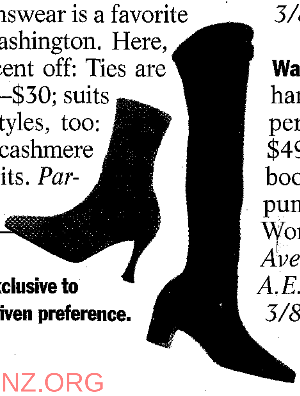
JOURNAL KEEPERS, TAKE NOTE: Look beyond the pricey Asian jewelry at **Himalayan Crafts** for great deals on paper goods, like rice-paper pads ($2.75) and hardcover notebooks ($5–$12). You'll find standard CD-size Tibetan books as well as cornhusk- and bamboo-covered styles. Write your memoirs by moonlight with **Rebecca Moss**'s battery-operated Night Writer ballpoint pen ($15). Casting a discreet halo from the nib, it'll curb prying too. *Himalayan Crafts, 2007 Broadway, near 70th St. (787-8500). Rebecca Moss, 510 Madison Ave., at 53rd St. (832-7671).*

Picks of the Week

Paul Stuart's classic menswear is a favorite of Wall Street and Washington. Here, it's more than 70 percent off: Ties are $6–$12; shirts are $20–$30; suits are $100. Women's styles, too: $25 cotton shirts, $75 cashmere sweaters, and $150 suits. *Parsons School of Design, 560 Seventh Ave., at 40th Street; A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.–Thurs. 9–6:30; 3/9–3/11.*

Laura Beth's Baby Collection is one-stop personal shopping for custom nursery accessories. Now it's all 30 percent off: Birth announcements start at $70 for 50; linens are $14–$140. Laura Beth will mix and match, and even hold gender-specific orders until the birth. *300 E. 75th Street, Suite 24E (717-2559; by appointment only); checks accepted; 3/8–4/1.*

Felissimo, midtown's luxury-housewares-and-accessories mecca, is clearing out stock at 30 to 70 percent off: Cotton crocheted bath sheet, was $48, now $24; silver-plated bar set, was $70, now $30; pashmina stole, was $475, now $143. *10 W. 56th Street (247-5656); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–6, Thurs. till 8; 3/8–3/31.*



Warren Edwards's winter stock of handmade shoes is now 30 to 60 percent off: pony loafers, were $495, now $295; high-heeled suede boots, were $750, now $325; suede pumps, were $455, now $265. Women's sizes 5½–12. *475 Park Ave., near 57th St. (752-4883); A.E., checks; Mon.–Sat. 10–6; 3/8–3/17.* ■

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

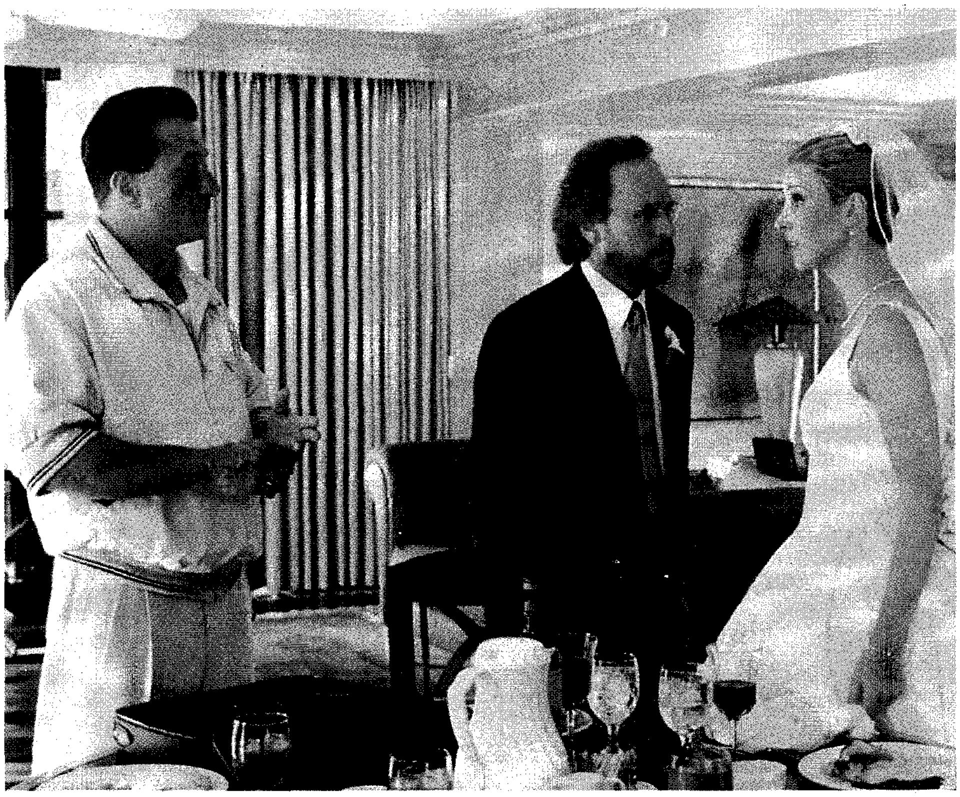
Photographs: top, Amy Freeth; bottom, Gary Goldberg for Warren Edwards

MOVIES PETER RAINER

Gangster's Rap

Hot on the heels of 'The Sopranos' comes 'Analyze This,' in which De Niro loses the safety net and swan-dives into parody as a mobster taking the talking cure.

THE DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY has been in the pop-psych pantheon for so long that it was only a matter of time before Hollywood came up with the bright idea of highlighting a dysfunctional Family—as in mafiosi. Actually, crime clans in the movies have always been clinical cases; it's just that until recently, nobody thought to put them on Prozac. The HBO series *The Sopranos* features James Gandolfini as an anxiety-choked New Jersey mob underboss who begins seeing a psychiatrist (played, fittingly, by Lorraine Bracco, from *GoodFellas*). Now there's the new Robert De Niro comedy **Analyze This**, which proceeds from the perfectly reasonable assumption that gangsters are human, too. They may even need some counseling in order to become happy, well-adjusted gangsters. Paul Vitti (De Niro), ascending to his role as crime-family capo, suddenly finds himself experiencing panic attacks. He backs down from whacking one of his rivals as his goons look on dumbfounded. Things get worse. He bawls uncontrollably; his mistress no longer turns him on. Vitti's bodyguard, Jelly (Joseph Viterelli), delivers his boss to a psychiatrist (an unduly dour Billy Crystal) with all the trepidation of feeding him to the fishes.



Transference: De Niro, with Billy Crystal and Lisa Kudrow, in Harold Ramis's *Analyze This.*

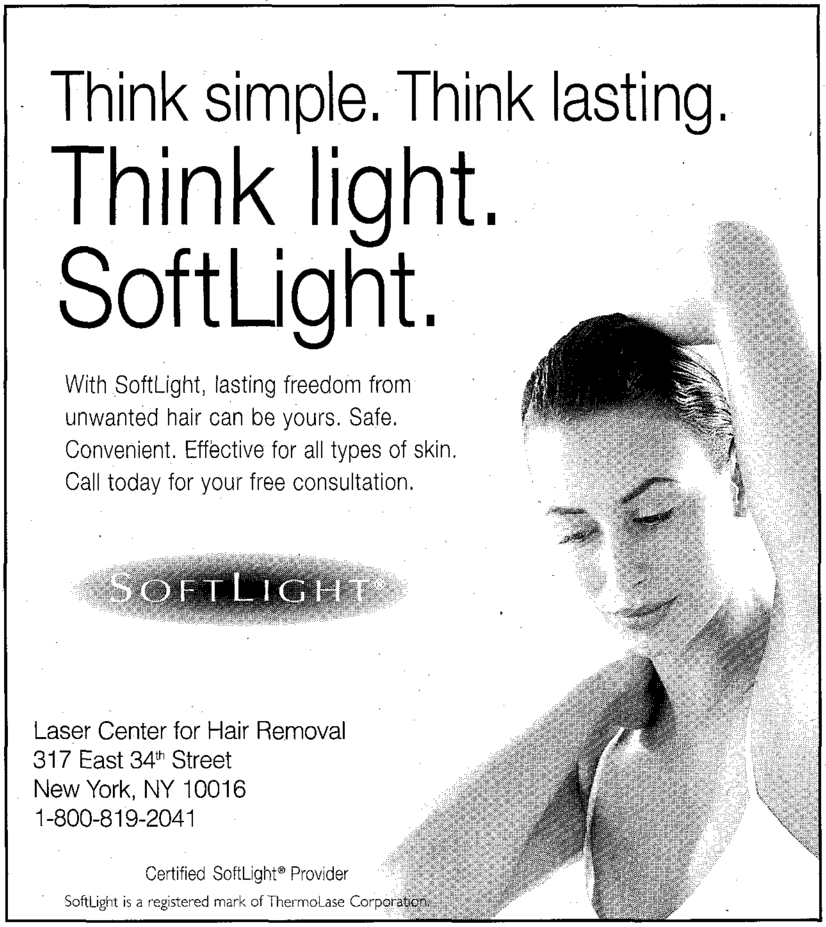
The spectacle of a Mafia boss crying his eyes out in therapy, or being asked to work out his rage by slamming a pillow, almost compensates for this comedy's many missed opportunities. Harold Ramis—who directed from a script he co-wrote with Peter Tolan and Kenneth Lonergan—doesn't get maximum laughs from the material because, on some level, he seems to think therapy might actually *work* for his crime capo. What should be a send-up of both mob movies and touchy-feely psychiatry ends up being more like a winsome buddy film about a pair of self-actualized commanders-in-chief with matching baggage: Vitti had a distant relationship with his crime-boss dad, and Ben Sobol, the psychiatrist, has his own Oedipal load. His pop-therapist father (Bill Macy), author of the best-seller *Tell Me What You Feel, Tell Me What You Want,* regards his son as a mope, and won't even guarantee an appearance at Ben's impending wedding to a TV newscaster (Lisa Kudrow). Ben and Vitti learn life lessons from each other. And what we learn—yet again—is that potentially terrific comedies are often whacked by filmmakers who feel the need to spread a little therapy themselves.

Nevertheless, it's still possible to have a good time at this movie, and the primary reason is De Niro. He turns himself into a great big crybaby goon: At times, Vitti is like a made-man version of Lou Costello. (Ben is his Bud Abbott.) He's a guy who's always on the lookout for enemies but is totally flummoxed in confronting the enemy within. He approaches his analytic sessions as if they were summit meetings. Usurping the doctor's armchair, he swigs a Scotch. Initially on guard, he begins to catch on to the ritual—he's a fast learner. With his crook's wiles, he sizes up Ben's weak points and turns the tables. It's like learning a new scam.

De Niro was reportedly wary of lampooning his trademark mafioso character, but the truth is, it's high time he lightened up. He's been coasting for a long time on his Greatest Living American Actor rep. When he plays a serious role now, mostly what we get are the tics and flourishes of a once formidable talent. There's a sameness to his presence, because this actor who used to set off depth charges chooses to keep things on the roiling surface. He's become a kind of brand name. You know what you're getting when you see him: a woozy wariness, a modicum of danger, world-weariness, a cracked smile.

But comedy—in its largest sense—brings De Niro back to life as an actor; it always has. Back in 1970,

Photograph by Phillip Caruso/Warner Brothers.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when he was first becoming recognized in the movies, he appeared in Brian De Palma's *Hi, Mom!* as a Vietnam vet guerrilla terrorist/porno-peep-show player, and he gave it a revue-sketch jive. In *Mean Streets* and *Taxi Driver* and, for some of the way, *Raging Bull* and *King of Comedy,* he brought out the comic horror in derangement as nobody had ever done before. He was unreachable in a new and ghastly groove that seemed peculiarly modern—both in-your-face and far gone—and his chill cackle carried no overtones. De Niro was the emblematic actor of his generation because he seemed to embody the country's furious contradictions. Later on in his career, after the heat burned off his performances, he could still refresh himself with a wonderful doodle of a comic turn, as he did in *Wag the Dog,* playing a presidential adviser with a poise so calculated it seemed like effrontery.

De Niro is having fun in *Analyze This* in the same way Brando did in *The Freshman* when he lampooned his Don Corleone. Brando was attacked for that movie as if he'd committed sacrilege, and yet he'd given a real performance. He twirled our memories of him in *The Godfather,* incorporating all the jokes and takeoffs that had built up around his portrayal over the years. De Niro's twirlmanship isn't as adept, but it recalls the improv-class looseness of his *Hi, Mom!* days. His presence here is such a whammy that we may never be able to keep a straight face watching him play another deadly goombah. If we're lucky, maybe he won't want to play those roles anymore anyway.

In brief: THE CURRENT BRITISH CINEMA lurches between genial little nothing movies like *The Full Monty* and *Waking Ned Devine* and scabrous jags like *Trainspotting,* with time out for the odd costume epic. **Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels** is in the scabrous mode, and I like it better than *Trainspotting*—it doesn't pretend its shenanigans are revolutionary. It's about four petty hoodlums—well played by Jason Flemyng, Nick Moran, Jason Statham, and Dexter Fletcher—who, after a rigged poker game, find themselves owing £500,000 to underworld boss Hatchet Harry (P. H. Moriarty). Coming up with the debt, they throw in a double-cross of their own. Guy Ritchie, a first-time writer-director, sets his rumbles in London's East End, with four separate gangs going at it like a serial gunfight at the O. K. Corral. An MTV-generation Peckinpah, Ritchie stages the splatter with a hideous giddiness. He's one to watch. ■

Peter Rainer's 1998–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

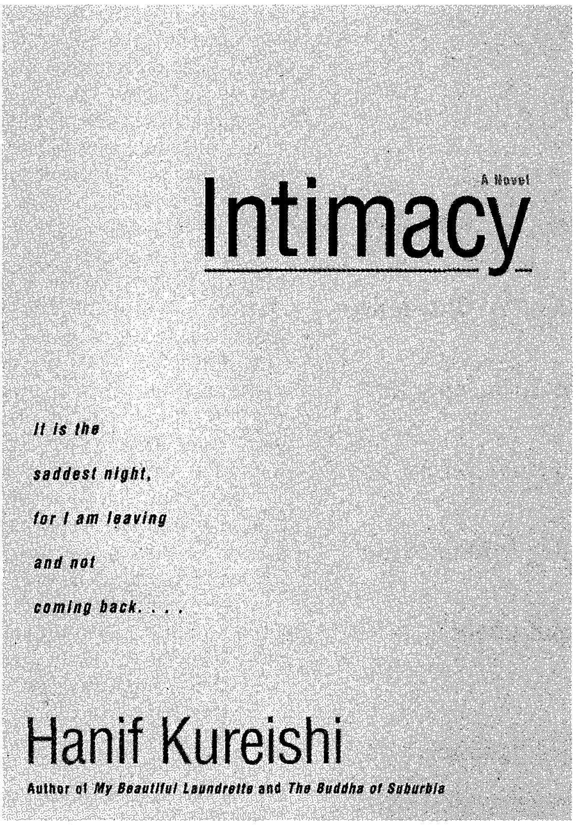
BOOKS WALTER KIRN

Diet Fiction

New novels by Hanif Kureishi and Chimo are attractively slender—the book as accesory—but there's less there than meets the eye.

Intimacy
BY HANIF KUREISHI
Scribners; 128 pages; $22

Lila Says
BY CHIMO
Scribners; 128 pages; $20


A Novel
Intimacy
It is the saddest night, for I am leaving and not coming back. . . .
Hanif Kureishi
Author of My Beautiful Laundrette and The Buddha of Suburbia

***Intimacy* uses brevity to convey claustrophobia; *Lila Says* uses it to seem sincere.**

SIZE MATTERS IN FICTION, BUT SO DOES LACK OF size. Everything else being equal, fat novels tend to be perceived as serious, very thin ones as more honest, more real. Writers address these age-old expectations by filling their big books with philosophy and cramming their little ones with feeling. Lately, it's the massive efforts that have gotten more attention, but that may be changing. Witness two new miniatures published by the same company, Scribners, and promoted for their supposed authenticity. Sized to fit on a key chain and packaged to resemble tiny fashion accessories, one book is said on its jacket to be "searing," the other "wrenching." Appearances deceive, though.

The searing novel is Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy,* whose title is both immodest and modest at once, in the slickest contemporary style. The title is a good guide to what's inside: a cold little slice of marital agony set in media-savvy upscale London, where passionless unions are hardly news, particularly among the rich and educated. From movies such as *Sunday Bloody Sunday* and Harold Pinter's *Betrayal,* we already know the story, if not the characters and 90 percent of the terse, inhibited dialogue. All is disconnect and fractured silence, the atonal music of never-meeting minds. The tone is stinging and contemptuous, the atmosphere one of bloodless luxury, the moral that there can be no moral. Indeed, what allows the novel to be so short is that its immaculate familiarity and total dependence on received ideas relieves it of the traditional obligations to make a world, draw characters, stimulate expectations, and cast a mood. With the tricky business of creation taken care of by his predecessors, Kureishi is free to concentrate on compression.

Intimacy is nothing if not elegant. The story inhabits a suspended moment between a momentous personal decision and its inevitable execution, announcing its ending the moment it begins. The narrator, Jay, a self-hating screenwriter whose job is to turn classic literature into pap (do fictional screenwriters ever do otherwise?), has decided to leave his wife the following morning. This won't be hard because she's such a pill. Susan, a yuppie neat freak who works in publishing (another big no-exit career in fiction), is given not a single attribute that anyone would want to stick around for, making Jay's decision to split the marriage about as interesting as the reflex to spit out a mouthful of curdled milk. Harder for Jay will be leaving his children, whom he claims to love and adore, despite the fact that the book's domestic vignettes are tinged with such ennui and boredom that neither the kids nor Jay's alleged feelings for them are anything more than narrative postulates meant to provide a jumping-off point for Jay's woolly meditations on abandonment.

The result is a paradoxical entity: a very short novel that still feels hugely padded. Proceeding by means of portentous interjections between longer descriptive passages ("In the morning I will be gone"; "I am kicking over the traces"; "Tomorrow I will do something that will damage and scar them"), *Intimacy* aspires to a terrifying, fatalistic flatness, but what it achieves is just handsome tedium. The pages are riddled with epigrams and axioms that spring fully formed from Jay's tortured, literate mind and sound like karaoke Shaw: "Patience is a virtue only in children and the imprisoned." "I figured that doing nothing was sometimes the best way of doing something." The case Jay makes for sex and self-expression over a life of impotence and duty is treated like revolutionary thought instead of seventies *Fear of Flying* kitsch, and when, after more than 100 pages of sterile dialectics, he finally flies the coop, we wonder what took him so long.

The wrenching short novel is *Lila Says,* by Chimo. Given our two countries' history of embracing what's most embarrassing about each other's cultures, it's no

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surprise that this best-seller from France ("The most sensational foreign novel in recent memory," the cover tells us) should land in the United States. The book purports to be something more compelling than your ordinary first novel. It's a work of outsider art, allegedly, plunked down on the doorstep of its publisher in the form of two messy, scrawled-on notebooks. *Chimo,* the name of the 19-year-old narrator, is a pseudonym for the unknown author, and there's a strong suggestion that the book is some sort of real-life cri de coeur composed in obscurity by an urban wolf boy. Undoubtedly, this is all a lot of bull, though. Had *Lila Says*—which verges on kiddie porn—been submitted all typed and tidy, it could only have been presented to the public as a piece of unfiltered exploitation rather than as a publishing event. (To add to the novel's air of primitivism, the editors reproduce a page of the sloppy original manuscript.)

Lila is 16, a resident of a suburban housing project whose hopelessness and spiritual squalor are endlessly editorialized about by our working-class hero, Chimo. She flashes her privates at him on their first meeting and then goes on, in triple-X detail, to tell of her couplings with older men. (Maybe it's the translator's fault, but her war stories sound like the bogus letters printed at the front of *Penthouse.*) Hardened by poverty and ugliness, yet untouchably innocent within, the two young waifs seem skillfully designed to appeal to leftist intellectuals infatuated with the noble-savage myth. If they were real, Norman Mailer might well adopt them, especially the Genet-like Chimo, who, when he isn't comparing Lila's genitals to everything from "one of those paper airplanes kids make in school" to "golden grass in fairy tales," is describing his lonely, underdog struggle to lift himself out of despair through daily journal writing.

This transparent attempt to elevate what boils down to a graphic game of doctor finished off with a flourish of ultraviolence feels like the stunt of a middle-aged journeyman, not the passionate outburst of a new Rimbaud. The story is tidily structured, with mounting action and a final obligatory scene that gathers all the principals in one room. What's more, the prose—a comma-studded pileup of naïvely poetic sentence fragments—is so elaborately loose that it must be counterfeit. Unlike *Intimacy,* whose brevity is meant to convey claustrophobia and tension, *Lila Says* uses shortness to seem sincere. Both efforts seem like cunning attempts to fob off used goods on a gullible reading public. To neatly shrink-wrap stale material doesn't entitle one to label it FRESH. ■

Walter Kirn's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Smart City

continued from page 55

sign that New York is a depraved, un-American, evil place on the brink of calamity than the $23 hamburger. So when its perpetrator, new Patroon chef Geoffrey Zakarian, says he thought about taking it off the menu and serving it only to customers who knew enough to ask for it (like Anna Wintour, who started ordering Zakarian's off-the-menu burgers sans bun when he was still feeding publishing's power-lunchers at 44), you might think it's because he's a bit embarrassed by the un-burgerlike price. In fact, he isn't: He claims his hamburger—a bigger, better version of the one he offered at 44—merits its price tag, and we agree, especially if someone else is paying. The flawless bun is baked at Balthazar; the super-fatty beef is carefully ground twice to achieve just the right texture, neither too coarse nor too mushy, and grilled over an oak-hardwood-coal fire; the lettuce is crispy and the tomato juicily ripe, even in mid-winter; and the thick-cut yet crispy fries alone are worth a hefty sum.

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With all due respect to the bunless Ms. Wintour, a brilliant burger needs a worthy bun. They're a team, the burger and the bun. An American culinary institution. A burger without a bun is like the Captain without Tenille, Dolce without Gabbana, Puffy without his entourage. How far would Ray Kroc have gotten selling naked beef patties? Thankfully, the brothers Bruce and Eric Bromberg of the Blue Ribbon Bakery—the even quirkier year-old offshoot of their quirkily eclectic Blue Ribbon restaurant—understand this. Their burger ($9.50) is a tribute to the virtues of teamwork and the primacy of bread. Bruce apprenticed at Paris's legendary Poilâne bakery, which accounts for the high quality of the Blue Ribbon bun—large, flattened, slightly sweet, and egg-washed, baked in the 130-year-old wood-burning oven hidden in the basement of the former bodega (an amenity that persuaded the brothers to take the space). Lightly toasted with a nice crunch around the edges, the bun's sturdy enough to stand up to the juicy meat yet soft enough to blend in, not so bold as to steal the show. The freshly ground chuck patty—on the skinny side, the way some aficionados say it should be—is slightly crisp and charred around the edges (but not crumbly) and juicy inside. Topped with smoky bacon and a wedge of Gruyère, blue, Cheddar, or goat cheese swiped from the restaurant's artisanal cheese course—or just a familiar slice of American—the burger and bun make a lovely pair, and with the excellent Mickey D's–thin golden fries, a classic triumvirate. ■

THEATER JOHN SIMON

Shooting Blanks

The usually lovable Bernadette Peters misfires in 'Annie Get Your Gun'; 'Not About Nightingales' is a paragon of ensemble acting and masterly direction.

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE TO even dislike Bernadette Peters? Yet her Annie Oakley in the revival of **Annie Get Your Gun** is something to elicit potshots from the most pacific spectator. It is a mixture of miscasting and misdirecting, but also terrible miscalculation on the actress's part. When Frank Butler sings to Annie, "A doll I can carry / The girl that I marry / Must be," it is the sort of thing one tells a ragamuffin bordering on virago. Miss Peters, however, is petite, cute, and cuddly, just an iota short (or long) of JonBenet Ramsey. Her drawl is a farrago of southern, Texan, and Brooklynese, issuing slowly, with many a ritard, rubato, and tremolo in both speech and song. But the matinee audience around me, looking duly papered, responded with nonstop multiple orgasms.

Too bad that the show has two choreographers, Graciela Daniele and Jeff Calhoun, and no director, although the former is listed in that capacity. Even the dances look like leftovers from *Ragtime* (Daniele) and *The Will Rogers Follies* (Calhoun). And they are often out of character, as when the large and virile Frank, seated on the floor, latches on to the leg of the last boy in a chorus line and is dragged comically across the stage.

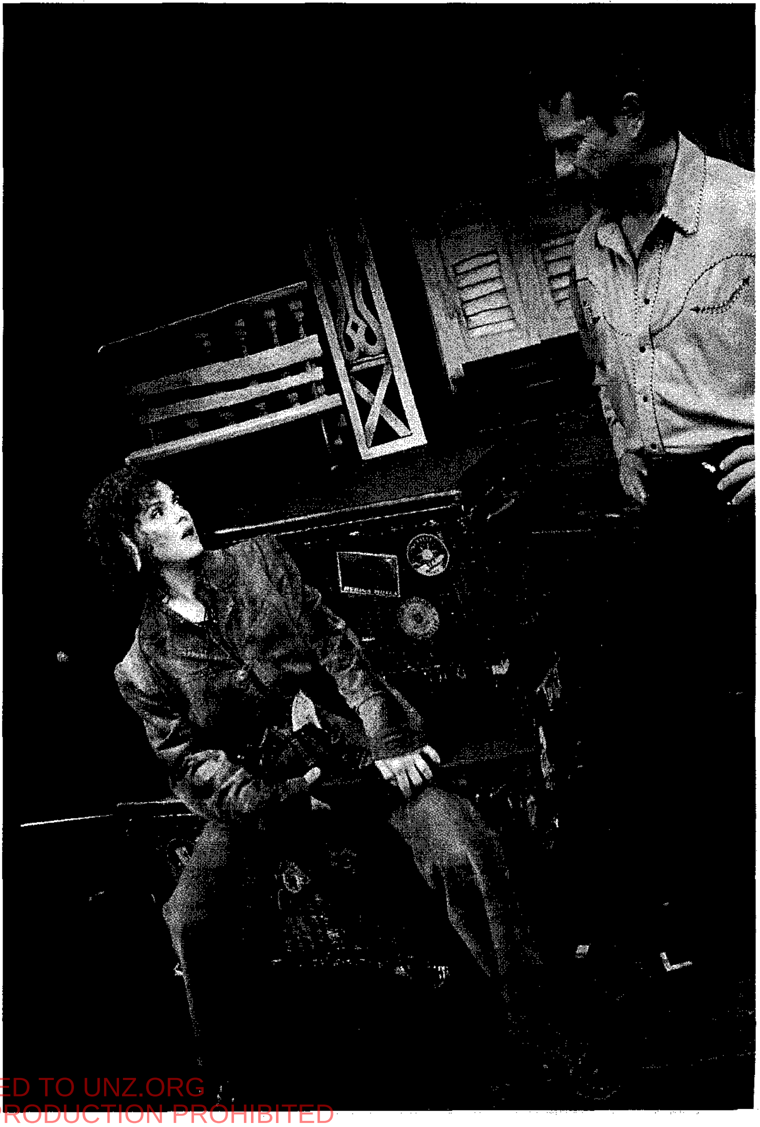
A total overhaul was deemed necessary out of deference to Indians and feminists. Peter Stone was brought in for that purpose: The "I'm an Indian Too" and "I'm a Bad, Bad Man" numbers were accordingly omitted, other excisions and changes were made (replacing ethnic humor with equally dubious big-boob jokes), and a new concept was imposed. We now get Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show performing a play-within-a-play about Frank and Annie, a tired and tiresome device that undercuts the story's immediacy and emotional impact. Thus, to fit the concept, the production opens gratuitously with "There's No Business Like Show Business" in tacky Lake Tahoe style; by the time the song is reprised in the appropriate places, it no longer surprises and delights.

The admirable Tony Walton's sets are pleasant but unduly constricted by being obliged to represent a play-within-a-play. Conversely, William Ivey Long's costumes are excessive and inappropriate. Most surprising, Miss Peters, in somewhat ragged voice, delivers her songs as if they were unconnected nightclub numbers. But then, I can't say much for Bruce Coughlin's arrangements either.

Tom Wopat is a solidly likable, no-nonsense Frank Butler, honestly acted and decently sung. As his assistant, Valerie Wright is the stock comic sourpuss. Ron Holgate is a plausible Buffalo Bill, but Gregory Zaragoza, a genuine scion of the Pima tribe, is a Sitting Bull turned out of P.C. reverence into a wooden Indian Custer would have demolished like a sitting duck. As the male half of the secondary couple, Andrew Palermo sings winningly and dances with spectacular airiness, but his slight stature causes problems.

The laughs are there, all right, many of them added by Stone, and the Irving Berlin score remains indestructible. Still, anyone who listens to a cast recording with the indomitable Ethel Merman or the playful Mary Martin will get a better idea of what this show can be. Miss Peters's Annie, like this *Annie Get Your Gun*, misfires.

IT IS NOT OFTEN THAT A LOST EARLY WORK OF A PLAYWRIGHT is exhumed smelling like roses rather than of corpse. That, however, is the case of the remarkable **Not About Nightingales** (1938), the fourth play by Tennessee Williams, for whose re-emergence Vanessa Redgrave's snooping deserves our first round of applause. Many more must go to the play at the Circle in the Square, which should become a place of pilgrimage not only



Gun-shy: Bernadette Peters and Tom Wopat in *Annie Get Your Gun.*

Photograph by Junichi Takahashi.

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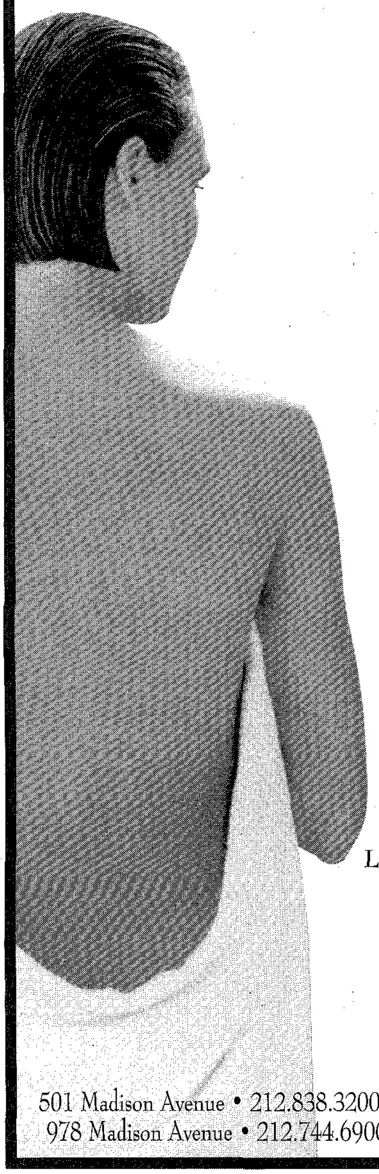

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for faithful Williams fans but also for anyone looking for powerful theater resoundingly mounted.

Though Tennessee vehemently denied it, this prison play is melodrama, but even that lowly genre, elevated by a nascent genius, can prove as intellectually stimulating as it is viscerally gripping. It is the unsettling work the 27-year-old dramatist submitted to the socially conscious Group Theater, which curtly rejected it. Reflect on what talent was required to flesh out so many characters—inmates, guards, prison employees, and the warden—on the basis of a mere magazine article about a scandal in a Pennsylvania prison. Twenty-five prisoners, thought to be the ringleaders of a hunger strike caused by appalling food, were confined to a punitive boiler room whose temperature could go up to 200 degrees. Four of the men were found dead, roasted alive. Tom Williams, as he was then known, had not done actual time in jail, but his early home life felt like incarceration.

The play shuttles between the prison block—where a number of diverse prisoners roister, quarrel, and struggle to survive under the draconian regime of a psychopathic prison warden, Boss Whalen—and the warden's office and waiting room. Here an intelligent, self-taught inmate, Jim Allison, works as a file clerk, unjustly called a stoolie by his fellow prisoners although he strives to help them. Whalen plays a cat-and-mouse game with Jim, but an even nastier one with Eva, the desperate young woman happy to find employment as his secretary, even though his attentions to her are far from benevolent. Eva and Jim attempt a brief, foiled love affair.

Expecting something conventional along the lines of the then-popular prison movies, I was stunned and excited to find something incomparably finer—more touching, humane, humorous, and impassioned. Also a bit self-consciously poetic and symbolic, a double-edged sword Williams kept honing all his life. What he wrote here lends itself splendidly to both small and thunderously big performances—none bigger than Corin Redgrave's grotesque yet scary Boss Whalen. Scarcely less sharp, in this Anglo-American production, is the superb work of such British and American actors as Finbar Lynch, Sherri Parker Lee, and James Black—indeed of the entire cast, a perfectly homogenous ensemble, working in Richard Hoover's masterly set that puts this hostile space to exemplary use.

Stupendous is the word for Trevor Nunn's direction, the kind you see only a few times in a life of theatergoing. Even if you shun so-called depressing plays, you'd better catch this one, unless you want regrets for the rest of your days. ■

John Simon's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

ART MARK STEVENS

New Brunswick Stew

Forty years on, assessing the achievements and impact of a New Jersey–based coterie of artists who turned their backs on Abstract Expressionism.

THE HISTORY OF ART DEPENDS UPON SMALL CIRcles of friends. They provide the first essential audience for many young artists. They toughen up the puppyish, encourage the taking of awkward new steps, and provide a refuge from indifference. In the late fifties, a group of this kind jelled around Rutgers University. A number of friends began challenging one another to make art that did not simply copy the Abstract Expressionism that was then the rage in New York City. The exhibition **"Off Limits: Rutgers University and the Avant Garde, 1957–1963,"** now at the Newark Museum, presents the achievement of this circle—a significant story in its own right that also has an important bearing on American culture. This mischievous work, part of a larger sea change that occurred in art during the late fifties, remains controversial. It is still tricky to think about and judge.

Waterwork: Robert Whitman's *Shower* (1963).

Photograph by Benjamin P. Bloom.

Organized by Joseph Jacobs of the Newark Museum, in collaboration with Joan M. Marter and Julia Robinson, the exhibit includes more than 70 works by a group of eight artists (Allan Kaprow, Robert Watts, George Segal, Geoffrey Hendricks, Robert Whitman, Lucas Samaras, George Brecht, and Roy Lichtenstein). Naturally, the museum makes much of the New Jersey connection, suggesting that Rutgers was an "incubator" for the art that has evolved during the past 40 years, including Happenings, performance art, Fluxus, Pop, and conceptual art. This Jersey patriotism is colorful but misleading. These were New York–directed artists, inspired by other New York artists like John Cage and Robert Rauschenberg, who happened to uncork some of their youthful work in the neighborhood of the sculptor George Segal's farm in South Brunswick.

"Off Limits" captures the mood of a moment rather than the nature of a place. Like the Beats, this particular circle of friends hoped to fling open every closed door. They preferred the cacophonous street to the contemplative museum with its cult of the masterpiece, and they sought to celebrate the here and now rather than some putative "posterity." They raised their eyes from the easel and refused to turn their backs on the booming pop culture of America in the fifties: They would make use, in short, of both life and *Life* magazine. For most of the group, who were in their twenties and thirties, Allan Kaprow was the main impresario of the new freedoms. According to Samaras, Kaprow gave him "permission: 'You can do it, why not?' " Roy Lichtenstein, who began leaving Abstract Expressionism behind to paint Pop imagery, said much the same thing. Kaprow taught him, he said, that "art doesn't have to look like art."

Kaprow himself created room-size environments and Happenings—precursors, respectively, of the installation and performance art of today. The Newark exhibit includes several examples of Kaprow's early work, such as *Beauty Parlor IV,* in which viewers could create their own identities through the use of masks and costumes and then document those creations in a photo booth. Other artists worked in similar ways, concocting, for example, absurdist "games" without beginning or end; in Robert Watts's *Checkers (Floating Checkers With Fish),* several goldfish float aimlessly about a checkerboard. In the early sixties, Watts and George Brecht founded the "Yam Festival"—the un-Spoleto—for which they devised numerous lectures, events, and artful goings-on.

Most work in this tradition did not live long. You had to be at a Happening when it happened, or, alas, nothing much would happen. What was once a witty celebration of flux soon became, for subsequent viewers, a yellowing collection of documents in a museum

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case. (With scholars tending the relics.) Does that make the work a failure? Only if you think art must exist to fill museums and please the future. Many other cultures have believed that art can also play a part in the actual practice of life. Why shouldn't ours? In the late fifties, for example, making art designed to live only in the present could embody a radical faith in fleetingness. Some artists in the group have refused to re-create early installations.

Other work from this circle of friends now looks very much like traditional art—with a few loose threads. Lichtenstein's earliest Pop paintings, such as *Look Mickey* or *Washing Machine,* are by far the most radical pictures he ever made. They are still rough and difficult on the eye. (Later, he polished up his Pop style.) George Segal's earliest plaster-cast figures look more ragged than his subsequent ones, which would become part of a blue-chip style represented in every museum of contemporary art. Lucas Samaras, then and now, has never made any concessions. The Newark exhibit contains a fascinating survey of his disturbing early work, including a grid of whisperlike delicacy constructed of toilet paper and razor blades.

Although these friends announced a new world, they were actually part of an old tradition in Western art. Again and again, from Giotto to Duchamp, artists have tried to close the gap between art and life, hoping to bring the restorative vitality of the world to an art that always threatens to grow too precious and narrow-minded. Much of the work on display in Newark is immature and forgettable yet reflects this classical tension. A few pieces are utterly startling. In Robert Whitman's *Shower,* for example, viewers walking through the museum happen upon a real shower stall with running water. A woman is washing herself under the shower head. Although her figure is a filmed projection, she appears shockingly alive and present through the rivulets of actual water. The museum suddenly seems to change character; a living, naked woman has stepped into the dressy and marbled role of "the nude." At times, she appears to be rinsing paint off her body, as if to cleanse herself of both the traditional artiness of the museum nude and, perhaps, the avant-garde artiness of Yves Klein, who was celebrated for covering his living models in blue paint and using them as "brushes." Inevitably, too, the bloody shower scene in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* comes to mind. Here, you become a Peeping Tom, transfixed by the voyeurism that helps focus high art, the movies—and life itself. ▬

Mark Stevens's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

DANCE TOBI TOBIAS

The King and He

The NYCB devotes a week to the works of Jerome Robbins—its second-best choreographer ever, after you-know-who; Lila York's 'Rapture' lives up to its name.

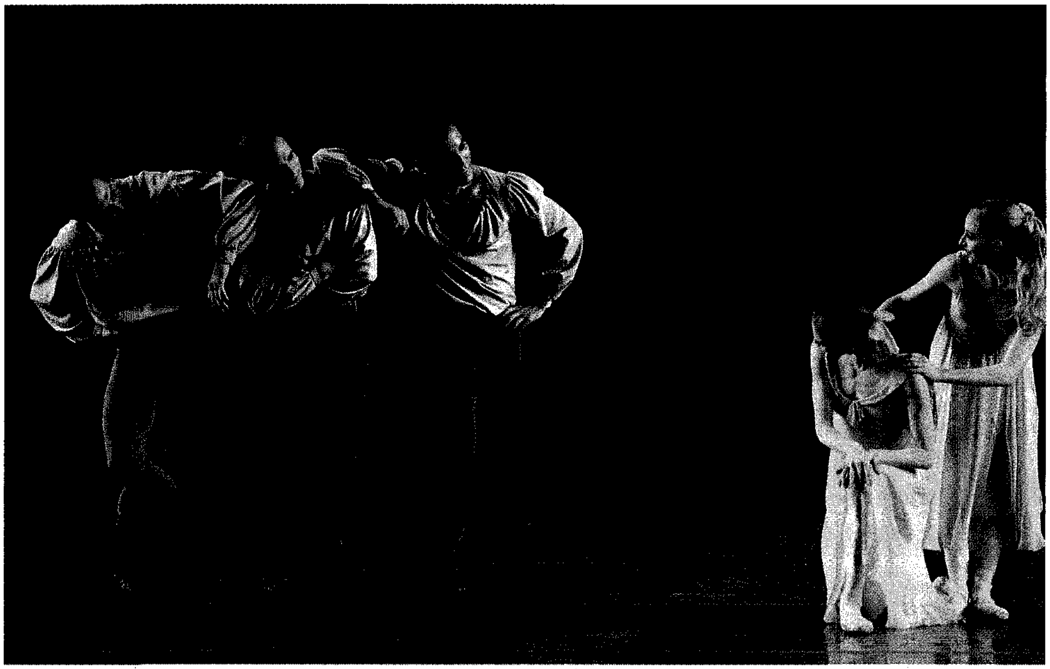
CONTINUING ITS FIFTIETH-ANNIVERSARY RITES, the New York City Ballet concocted a **"Jerome Robbins Celebration"**—a week of programs by the man who was indisputably the second-best choreographer ever to work with the company. With his fluency in both the classical and the jazz idioms, his theatrical know-how, his sense of American culture at the ordinary-folks level, and his instinct for young dancers' gifts, Robbins would easily have been king of the hill anywhere else. He started out at American Ballet Theatre, where his very first venture, the 1944 *Fancy Free*, was a smash hit. As everyone knows, Robbins left an indelible mark on Broadway (think *The King and I, Fiddler on the Roof, West Side Story*). He ran his own company briefly, too. But it was at the NYCB, working by choice alongside George Balanchine, whom he recognized as his superior (and therefore a colleague worthy of him), that Robbins was able to explore his more rarefied visions.

The "Celebration" represented these subtle, complex dreams with the austere *Goldberg Variations*, an intricate machine operating to the Bach score that's guaranteed to bore the unanalytic listener, and Robbins's masterpiece, the lovely *Dances at a Gathering*, set to far more accessible Chopin pieces. Even in these works, one sees the shrewd aspects of Robbins. *Goldberg* uses gimmicks (Robbins is a great one for gimmicks) to make a point about the connection of classical ballet to the social dances of Bach's time. (A mediocre Robbins piece, *The Four Seasons*, to opera-ballet music by Verdi, is comprehensible only as a similar attempt to co-opt theater history—in this case revealing the charming absurdity of antiquated theatrical conventions to the contemporary eye as well as their enduring beauties.)

Dances at a Gathering displays Robbins's penchant for treating a group of characters (however fluidly presented; this is a semi-abstract work) as a community united by tenderness, yet fiercely insular. Apparent here as well is Robbins's familiar conception of the figures he creates as dancers (that sacred breed) first, people second. Also visible are the choreographer's slightly too obvious cleverness about structure in space and time and, most disappointing, his rendering of emotion at a level that is touchingly young and romantic but not sufficiently sophisticated to match Robbins's evident intellect and artistic cultivation. Much as you—and I—may bask in the pleasures of *Dances at a Gathering*, if we compare it with Balanchine's *Liebeslieder Walzer*, we can see that when it comes to feeling, one is the expression of a perpetual young man's fancy, the other the product of a soul fully matured.

The "Celebration" occasioned some splendid dancing, especially at the up-and-coming level Robbins doted on. Particularly notable were Pascale van Kipnis, for her naturalness and élan; Riolama Lorenzo, for her unusual blend of glamour and technical prowess; and a handful of young men—among them Christopher Boehmer—who seem well on their way to soloist ranking. The best single performance—danseur noble purity meshed with an actor's texture and depth—came from the seasoned principal dancer Peter Boal in *Opus 19/The Dreamer*, a work that is hardly top-drawer Robbins. The week offered other lesser ballets and some of the choreographer's most striking ones, primary among these *Les Noces*. Inevitably, the chance to see wall-to-wall Robbins revealed deficiencies one might otherwise overlook. I, for one, realized with dismay that the ballets I had to miss because of the typical New Yorker's overcrowded schedule—*Afternoon of a Faun*, for instance, and *Antique Epigraphs*—were as clear in my mind from past performances

(continued on page 68)



***Dances at a Gathering*, part of the NYCB's weeklong Jerome Robbins retrospective.**

Photograph by Paul Kolnik.

JOHN LEONARD

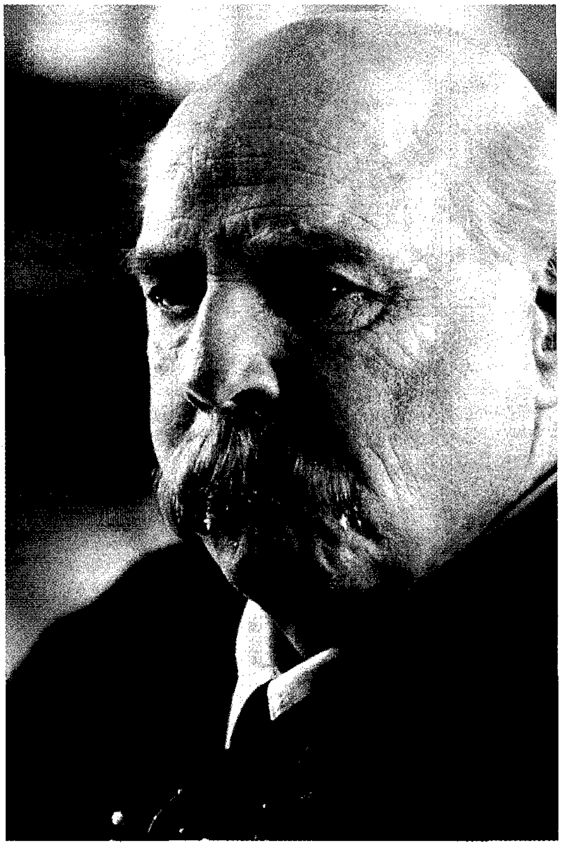
Clutch of Evil

Recalling Orson Welles in more ways than one, Marlon Brando plays a vile prison warden in 'Free Money'; for post-Monica syndrome, check out various Cleopatras.

HOW BIG IS MARLON BRANDO? NOT SINCE RHODES has there been such a colossus: vast, exorbitant, infamous—"too huge for mortal tongue, or pen of scribe," said Keats—as if, for breakfast, he'd consumed Orson Welles, Burl Ives, Fats Domino, and Sidney Greenstreet like so much porky sausage. And **Free Money** (Friday, March 12; 8 to 9:30 P.M.; Starz!) is such a little movie, however affable and eccentric, that the immensity of Marlon might have swamped it. So what the producers have done is link its other elements loosely, in a webwork full of gaping holes, and they net him. He will topple, with a quake. Yet even this snare he wears like a mantilla or the zodiac.

Brando, with a red mustache and a bald pate, is Swede, the sadistic warden of a state prison, the autocratic ruler of a small town, and the indulgent father of twin vixens (Holly and Christin Watson) cut from the same heart-shaped cookie cutter as Britney Spears, the parochial-school vamp of VH1. While Swede is busy shooting escaped prisoners for sport, the twins are bedding down in pickup trucks with local losers Thomas Haden Church and Charlie Sheen. Tricked into marrying the twins, who say they are pregnant, Thomas and Charlie are also bamboozled into living under Swede's repressive roof as indentured servants with once-a-month conjugal privileges, though never on Sundays. Naturally, they dream of a big score, which is what the "money train" looks like—a payload of retired American currency guarded by locals as yokel as they are.

Enter Mira Sorvino, who is not only a special agent with the FBI but also the daughter of corrupt judge Donald Sutherland, whom she hasn't seen in fourteen years. She is as sleekly modern, as trim-lined desktop, as iMac, PanaSync, Pentium III as Brando is primordial and antediluvian. A confrontation scene, in which he beats her on her pretty head with one of her own high heels before she shoots him, may be my favorite television moment of the past several seasons. Director Yves Simoneau and scriptwriters Joseph Brutsman and Tony Peck are obviously aiming for a *Fargo* sort of farce. What they achieve is more like *Wayne's World* meets *Winesburg, Ohio* at the corner of *Twin Peaks* and *Peyton Place.* But Marlon and Mira make it hum.



From *Stella!* to Starz!—Brando as prison warden Swede, the face of evil in *Free Money.*

DANA DELANY IS THE ONLY EXCUSE THEY THOUGHT THEY needed to remake **Resurrection** (Monday, March 15; 9 to 11 P.M.; ABC), which was just about big-screen, cotton-candy perfect back in 1980, with Ellen Burstyn as the hot-handed miracle healer Clare. And Delany is the only reason to sit still for another ride on this carousel of church-sale beatitudes. Stephen Gyllenhaal directs from the same Lewis John Carlino story as Daniel Petrie did, a story Carlino was commissioned to write for Burstyn. The Peachey Markowitz teleplay omits Sam Shepard's character but adds an AIDS case; and instead of Eva LeGallienne as the half-blind grandmother, we get Brenda Fricker as an embittered and litigious mom, Rita Moreno as the friend with mystical and "holistic" tendencies, and Nick Chinlund as the doctor who hopes that Clare is the next stage in Darwinian evolution as well as the cure for his own bedroom blues. Otherwise, it's the same sticky stuff—the auto accident that killed Clare's husband and left her paralyzed; the visions of the kindly, waterlogged, and therapeutic dead; the laying of hands upon a failing kidney here, a shattered elbow there; and the Big Good-bye to hearth and home, for all the leprous Calcuttas where "the wife of good luck" is so desperately needed.

If I were the Third World, I'd try to get all my doctors back from their residencies in the United States instead of relying so much on the random grace of promiscuous gods. Still, as much as cameras have loved Delany ever since *China Beach,* some of us love her even more. Some of us should be ashamed of ourselves for having slunk into *Exit to Eden* just to see her with her clothes off. But, as if *Exit* were *her*

(continued on page 68)

Photograph courtesy of Starz! Pictures.

RESTAURANTS HAL RUBENSTEIN

Tabla For Two

Just when the city seems about to drown in a sea of mediocre Indian food, along comes Tabla—with its two tiers and two complete menus—to turn the tide.

Twin peaks: The less-expensive, no-reservations Bread Bar is downstairs; Tabla proper is upstairs.

MAYBE I'VE JUST NEVER GOTTEN over *Gandhi* beating out *E.T.* for Best Picture, but I just can't bring myself to love Indian food. Surely, as a critic, it is wiser to hold one's cards a fork-length from one's chest, but it's dishonest to pretend an equal preference for all the world's kitchens, especially since I've continually feared that if I fail to live honorably in this world, my purgatory in the next will be a perfect facsimile of Sixth Street between First and Second Avenues. Of course, there are exceptions. I've had fine meals at Chola and Jackson Diner. And each time the wheel of trendy-restaurant fortune stops on Indian food, I head to a fresh outpost, like Ismail Merchant's Pondicherry, full of optimism. And then I encounter more Raj-kill—a chicken breast shrouded in sauce the color, density, and flavor of English banker flannels—and resume my apparently futile search.

Finally, it's over. It would be diminishing to categorize Floyd Cardoz's deliciously clean Goan-spiced Maine crab cake or his exquisite, indulgent pairing of Hudson Valley seared foie gras with a black-pepper, anise, and pear compote as nouvelle Delhi. However, at **Tabla** this angelically shy yet enthusiastic young chef has forged a fascinating and often deliriously satisfying union of this country's abundant produce with the strong, heady spices and bewitchingly pungent condiments and marinades of his homeland. Purists can carp that Cardoz's wondrously rich duck-and-potato samosa and his bone-suckingly superb braised oxtail with tapioca and beets are not authentic. And they're right—just as Jean-Georges Vongerichten's irresistible victuals at Vong aren't really Thai. God help those who choose pedigree over pleasure. What matters is that Tabla is a delightful surprise, unlike anything else in town. So, live without the mulligatawny for one night. You won't miss the sitar music or Siva statues either.

Much has already been written about Tabla, since it's the second of two new restaurants in the historic Metropolitan Life Tower (the first being Eleven Madison Park) created by Danny Meyer, the relentlessly attentive proprietor of Union Square Cafe and Gramercy Tavern. Breitling-dependable as Union Square is, it's a cool place, functioning as if cued to a metronome. Gramercy Tavern and Eleven Madison Park conform to the same impeccable, every-slicked-back-hair-in-place image.

But Tabla's not like that. What you note first is the radical departure in design; right angles begone. With its suspended second floor built around a "viewing well" that sneaks a peak at ground level, Tabla is all curves and swoops. White is banished, replaced by deep brushed metals, abundant redwood stain, and sponged walls in rich, vegetable-dye pigments that are a bit easier to deal with in the evening. It's a busy landscape, and the overhead halogens upstairs can cast unkind facial shadows (only Dietrich ever benefited from being lit this way), yet this uncharacteristic lack of moderation has produced two rooms, upstairs and downstairs, that are more relaxed and convivial than any other Meyer space. Even his rigorously trained waiters appear more at ease, revealing appealing personalities along with their expected cascades of information.

But one hopes Meyer & Co. are gracious enough to understand that for all their successfully atypical efforts, it is chef Cardoz who has made Tabla such a winning departure. You could eat his tandoori quail with black-pepper glaze in a hosed-down barn and still be stupidly happy. His taro-dusted halibut with white beans is simply spectacular, the ultimate fish and chips. The airy greens and sheep's-milk fritters in the house salad might float away if it weren't for piquant droplets of curry-lime vinaigrette. And a devilish mustard-oil-red-pepper coulis allows seared scallops to start velvety, then bite back.

Photograph by Robert Wright.

Occasionally, the East-West alchemy becomes forced, like one of those scenes in American remakes of foreign-language films when the humor just doesn't translate. Braised lamb shank in black pepper is curiously flat, as if the meat's natural flavor has been neutered. The wild-mushroom soup has a balance so subtle it can't be detected piping-hot, and by the time it cools, interest has waned. Beautifully aged sirloin resists a coriander-and-mustard crust. And mustard fettuccine with braised veal, baby spinach, and tomato kasundi is almost as busy as the first-floor ceiling's metallic basket weave. Something's got to go (in both cases). But veal loin with marrow-and-garlic jus is lushly distracting. A roasted poussin is vividly enhanced by black spice and yellowfoot chanterelles. Black bass in a maple-tamarind glaze, flaked with rice and seated precariously atop pea greens, has the sleek elegance of a vintage XKE on a straightaway. And thanks to a brazen coconut-coriander curry, going to City Island for lobster won't ever be as exciting again.

For the no-reservations dining area downstairs in the Bread Bar, Cardoz's completely separate menu lets you pile spiky grape-pine-nut and tomato-kalonji chutneys, a spunky lemon-chive raita, or guacamole with toasted cumin atop a host of chompable breads: horseradish taftan, buckwheat-and-honey or pumpernickel-caper roti, wheat parantha, plus a tantalizing rosemary-olive-oil naan. The lower-level combinations are lighter and more playful than those upstairs, as in a feisty rabbit pan roll with apple chutney, a spotlight-grabbing bowl of mussels steamed in kokum and ginger, and a chilly-scenes-of-winter-ridding bowl of lentil soup thickened by basmati rice. Cardoz's spice-rubbed tandoori lamb downstairs is superior to its second-level cousin, and the tandoor black bass is its upper-bunk rival's equal.

The two dessert menus had me debating whether to run up for the crunchy chocolate date cake, down for the triumphant vanilla-bean kulfi bathed in glistening blood-orange rose water, back up for crackling caraway crust surrounding a lovely apple tart or the spicy cornmeal crust under an unnervingly fine sweet-potato cheesecake, or to descend again for a special cardamom-tarted carrot cake. But then I realized there's no hurry; I'll be coming back. I have found my passage to India.

Tabla, 11 Madison Avenue, at 25th Street (889-0667). Mondays through Thursdays noon to 11 P.M., Fridays and Saturdays till 11:30 P.M. (At the Bread Bar, entrées are $14.50 to $21; at Tabla, lunch entrées are $17 to $23 and dinner is prix fixe only, $48). All major credit cards. ■

Hal Rubenstein's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Tobias

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as the works I saw during the "Celebration." This, to me, is the chief problem with Robbins's achievement: It exists on only one level. Robbins's ballets may be indelible, but there's not much more to them than meets the eye.

VETERAN PAUL TAYLOR DANCERS OFTEN TAKE to choreography as their careers evolve. The most popular of the Taylor brood just now is David Parsons, who has his own company; the finest by far is **Lila York**, a widely employed freelance dance-maker whose work is, lamentably, not often seen in New York. However, her signature piece, *Rapture*, created in 1995 for the Juilliard Dance Ensemble (the performing group of the celebrated dance academy), was the highlight of the present students' recent concert—which also included a self-consciously arty piece by Parsons.

Rapture (set to parts of two Prokofiev piano concertos) vividly reflects the situation of young adults about to leave the shelter of their nurturers and embark upon life as custodians of their own fate. The dance first displays them bursting with talent, daredevil skill, and optimism—greeting with sheer ebullience the miracle of being alive. A second section reveals the co-existing, or at least threatening, dark shadows: the melancholy and defeating experiences that will sober them all and destroy the least resilient among them. The concluding movement returns the survivors to irrepressible joy, but not before showing them richer and more serenely confident for the experience of their trials. York manages all this, mind you, simply by suggestion and without preaching.

Her choreographic technique is wonderfully able. York knows how to calibrate her movement vocabulary, how to keep her stage picture compelling, how to work solo or paired figures against large, spontaneous-looking ensemble formations, how to establish mood without lapsing into portentousness or sentimentality. Equally significant, her work has the impact of the authentic. The choreography appears to spring from genuinely felt real-life circumstances and emotions, not (as in many a contemporary effort) a highfalutin, self-conscious gloss on them, resonating with Significance. *Rapture* possesses an ecstatic energy in its allegro passages and an understanding and acceptance of life's struggles in its adagio section that reach the viewer unmediated by any kind of conceptual fanciness. Such professional acumen joined to such truly depicted feeling is to be cherished all the more because the combination is rare on the dance stage today. ■

Tobi Tobias's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Leonard

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fault, she has allowed herself to be stuck in a series of goody-two-shoes TV movies where, when she isn't performing miracles, she's dying of some dread disease.

What a waste of radiant sexuality. For instance, why not Dana as Cleopatra? She may not look like the Temple of Hathor bas-relief, but then, neither did the Cleos of Cecil B. DeMille (Claudette Colbert) or Joseph Mankiewicz (Elizabeth Taylor), not to mention Tiepolo. She is guessed about this week in back-to-back Discovery documentaries. In **Cleopatra's Palace: In Search of a Legend** (Sunday, March 14; 9 to 10 P.M.), the French diver-archaeologist Franck Goddio goes glub-glub with Omar Sharif in the harbor of Alexandria to bring up a stray sphinx, a statue of a high priest of Isis, and a stone head that's probably Octavius, all sunk in sewage since an A.D. 400 earthquake. Goddio rinses these relics, casts facsimiles, then dumps them back where they came from for Egyptians to dispose of as they see fit. In **The Real Cleopatra** (10 to 11 P.M.), a hackle of historians look at paintings of her, listen to poems about her, and dig up some of her royal dirt.

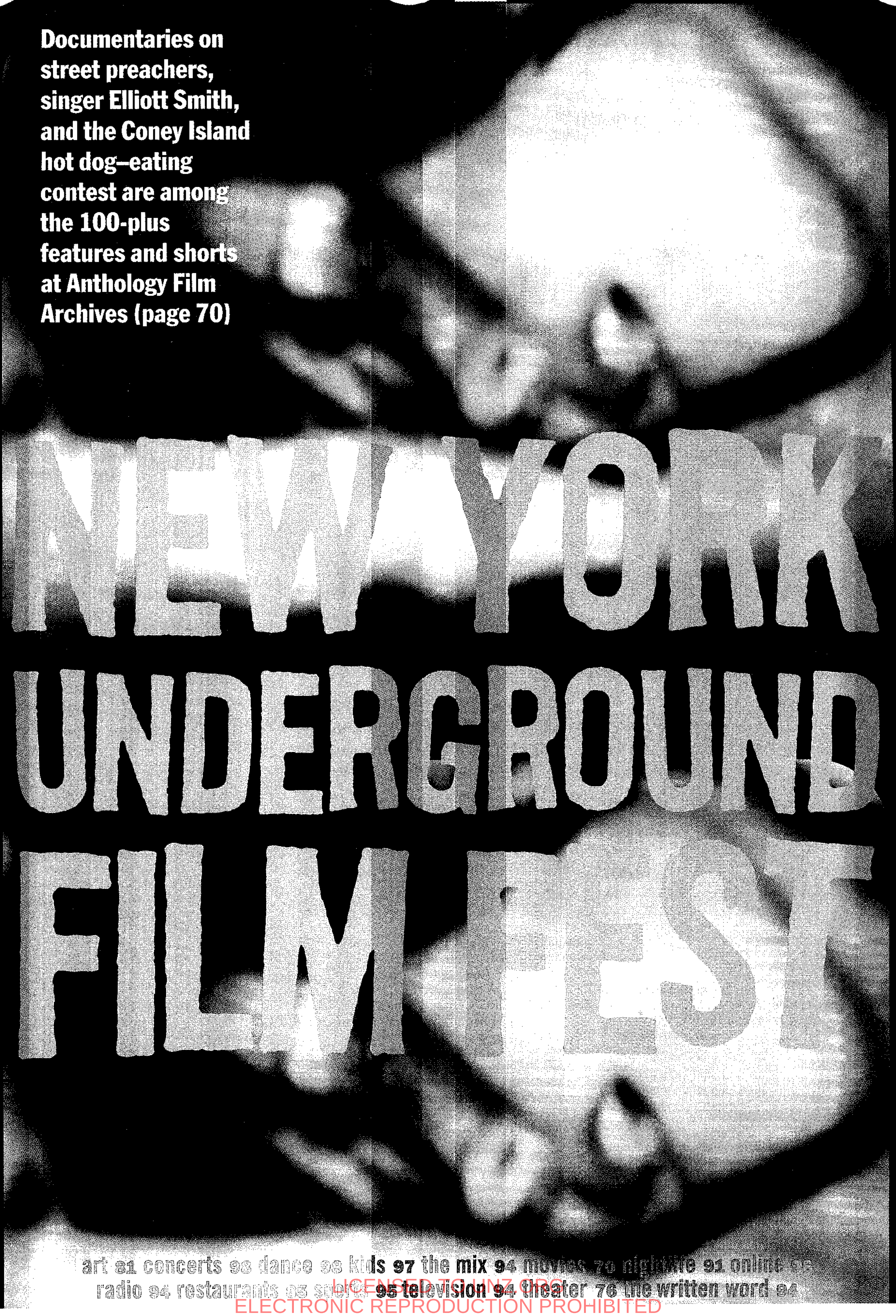
If this absorbs you as much as it did me, you may want to consult Lucy Hughes-Hallett's witty deconstruction, *Cleopatra: Histories, Dreams and Distortions* (Harper). She wasn't Egyptian; she was Greek. And the asp that bit her was really a cobra. And it bit her on an arm, not a breast, while she was otherwise fully clothed, as befits a working queen who spoke nine languages and cut a deal with the Nabateans for oil rights in the Dead Sea. Romans kept dropping in not for one-night stands but because they needed her naval fleet for their imperial war games. If Julius and Antony fathered children on her, in return she got such trophies as Lebanon, Syria, and some prime real estate around Jericho, from which she made a bundle by leasing it back to King Herod.

Her reputation has suffered from the fact that, because he won at Actium, Octavius got to write the history—after which came the fantasies of composers (Handel, Berlioz), playwrights (Shakespeare, Corneille, Shaw), and poets (Chaucer, Dante, Pushkin, Hugo, Swinburne, Keats). Whatever a neurotic male culture needed, Cleo provided. The Middle Ages insisted she kill herself for the love of a man, like Dido and Thisbe. The Reformation needed bad girls. Romantics required a man-eating femme fatale, morbid, mystical, alien, and other, a serpent of desire. You name it: lover, killer, or bimbo; sex kitten or Queen of Camp. Pornography! suggests Hughes-Hallett. Window-shopping! Tourism! I see Dana on a barge, quoting Yeats, wearing snakes. ■

John Leonard's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Cue

Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York



Documentaries on street preachers, singer Elliott Smith, and the Coney Island hot dog–eating contest are among the 100-plus features and shorts at Anthology Film Archives (page 70)

NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FEST

art 81 concerts 93 dance 93 kids 97 the mix 94 movies 70 nightlife 91 online [illegible]
radio 94 restaurants 85 sports 95 television 94 theater 76 the written word 94

movies

Irish Film Festival...*The Deep End of the Ocean*

Festival

The Real Deal

You can't call yourself an independent-film lover until you sample the daring productions at the sixth annual New York Underground Film Festival. Here—safe from self-conscious hipsters and test-marketers—are the visions of truly uncompromising artists. On the program are Paul McGuigan's *The Acid House* (the latest saga from *Trainspotting*'s Irvine Welsh, starring Ewen Bremner and Arlene Cockburn, above), and Todd (*Frisk* and *Little Shots of Happiness*) Verow's new all-digital feature *The Trouble With Perpetual Deja-Vu*. Documentaries include a portrait of singer-songwriter Elliott Smith (*Strange Parallel*); the shorts selection is headlined by an Amy Sedaris–co-written comedy called *The Trip Back*, a takeoff on the after-school specials we once knew and loved. And did we mention the selection of new films from the U.K.? March 10–14 at Anthology Film Archives. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

New Films

★**Affliction**—Writer-director Paul Schrader's adaptation of the 1989 Russell Banks novel is a heavy dose of oppressiveness. Barreling his way through this frostbitten inferno, Wade Whitehouse (Nick Nolte) is the archetypal walking wounded. He's a good man gnarled by primal circumstance. The world of this movie is framed as a battlefield of male privilege, and even if you reject the hallucinatory machismo at its core, it holds you. Nolte is near the top of his form. (Rainer; 1/11/99) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Cinemart.*

Analyze This—See Rainer, page 57. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; CO Coronet; UA Criterion; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Apple—The shocking semi-true story of two young Tehranian girls imprisoned by their parents. Directed by 18-year-old Samira Makhmalbaf. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Blast From the Past—A man comes out of a bomb shelter after 30 years alone. Starring Brendan Fraser, Alicia Silverstone, Sissy Spacek, and Christopher Walken. Directed by Hugh Wilson. (About 1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria.*

Blind Faith—When a black police officer's son is arrested for murder, a community begins a fiery debate of the ideologies in black America in the fifties. With Charles S. Dutton and Courtney B. Vance. Directed by Ernest Dickerson. (1 hr. 58 mins.; NR) *BAM Rose Cinemas.*

The Celebration—A family reunites for its patriarch's 60th-birthday party and certain horrible secrets spill out over dinner. Directed by Thomas Vinterberg. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

★**Central Station**—I can't join in with the prevailing opinion that Walter Salles's *Central Station* is on par with early De Sica—I love early De Sica too much. But in this otherwise rather schematic swatch of social catharsis, Brazil's Fernanda Montenegro gives the best performance by an actress I've seen all year. De Sica might not have made this movie, but he would have recognized in her bitter, beseeching portrayal a kindred character. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; CC Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Children of Heaven—A young boy loses his sister's only pair of shoes and tries to get them back without letting his parents know they are missing. Written and directed by Majid Majidi. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Conceiving Ada—An imagined biography of Lord Byron's daughter Lady Ada Lovelace, who developed the world's first computer language 100 years before computers were invented. With Tilda Swinton, Francesca Faridany, Karen Black, and Timothy Leary. Directed by Lynn Hershman Leeson. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

The Corruptor—An idealistic NYPD cop learns how power has corrupted his superiors. Starring Chow Yun-Fat and Mark Wahlberg. Directed by James Foley. (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) *Opens 3/12.*

Cruel Intentions—Teenage step-siblings make wagers regarding the sexual conquest of two innocent prep-schoolers. With Sarah Michelle Gellar, Ryan Phillippe, and Reese Witherspoon. Directed by Roger Kumble. (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Clearview's Chelsea; UA Criterion; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Dancemaker—A documentary about choreographer Paul Taylor and his dance troupe. By Matthew Diamond. (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

The Deep End of the Ocean—A woman loses her young son in a crowd and finds him again eight years later. Starring Michelle Pfeiffer, Treat Williams, and Whoopi Goldberg. Directed by Ulu Grosbard. (2 hrs. 28 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 3/12.*

Devil's Island—A family saga set in fifties Iceland. Directed by Fridrik Thor Fridriksson. (1 hr. 43 mins.; NR) *Opens 3/12 at Angelika Film Center.*

Dry Cleaning—Adultery among the bourgeoisie is still Topic A in many of the Gallic exports. In this latest one, co-writer-director Anne Fontaine presents us with a conventional couple, played by Charles Berling and Miou-Miou, who allow an androgynous punk-drag nightclub performer (Stanislas Merhar) into their lives—and beds. Everything that we see is tinctured with meaning: This couple who clean other people's dirty laundry end up swamped in their own. The effect is lackluster—like a Pinter play that's been given a snide-ectomy. (Rainer; 2/15/99) (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

8 MM—Set in the porno underworld, this is an exploitation movie about an exploitation movie. It

'Cue' cover photograph courtesy of the New York Underground Film Festival.

wallows in its own scum. Nicolas Cage, in a blanked-out performance, plays a private detective who is hired by a rich widow when she discovers in her late husband's safe an 8-mm. snuff film. Charged with finding out whether it's real, Cage descends into the porn pits and becomes deranged. Joel Schumacher directed with a floridness in the porn scenes that suggests he's still in his *Batman* mode; the screenwriter was Kevin Allen Walker, the same fun guy who gave us *Seven*. As Max, the porno-store clerk, Joaquin Phoenix is the only guy you don't want to see snuffed. (Rainer; 3/8/99) (About 2 hrs.; R) *Clearview's Chelsea; Loews State; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Clearview's Olympia; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Elizabeth—This film, about the daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, has real verve. It's not all that great even so, but in the historical-bio genre, liveliness counts for a lot. Cate Blanchett plays the young Elizabeth from the time she is nearly rendered headless by her half-sister Queen Mary (Kathy Burke) to her final ascension as the Virgin Queen. We are not to take that moniker literally. She's a sexy queen, especially when she realizes she needs to ensure her power by lopping off a few heads of her own. The Indian director Shekhar Kapur and his screenwriter, Michael Hirst, would like us to see her as a feminist icon: "I am no man's Elizabeth," she cries out while still in her marriageable mode. Later, she amends that: "I am married to England." Lucky England. (Rainer; 11/16/98) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Clearview's Chelsea West; Clearview's First & 62nd St. ; Loews 84th Street; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Enemy of the State—This film is set against the backdrop of top-secret government surveillance, and I suppose it's all meant to be Kafkaesque. But since this is a Jerry Bruckheimer production, it's more like Kafka on steroids. Gene Hackman (ostensibly Will Smith's co-star) plays a kind of defrocked former CIA agent named Brill who knows all sorts of clever secret-agent-type things. Brill reluctantly surfaces to offer his aid when a Washington lawyer, Robert Clayton Dean (Smith), is targeted by rogue National Security Agency operatives under the command of Thomas Brian Reynolds (Jon Voight). By accident, Dean finds himself in possession of a videotape of the murder, and runs for his life. If you're going to make a movie about how easy it is for our identities to be electronically stolen by the government, shouldn't you at least create people with identities worth stealing? (Rainer; 11/30/98) (2 hrs. 7 mins.; R) *CO Worldwide Cinemas; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

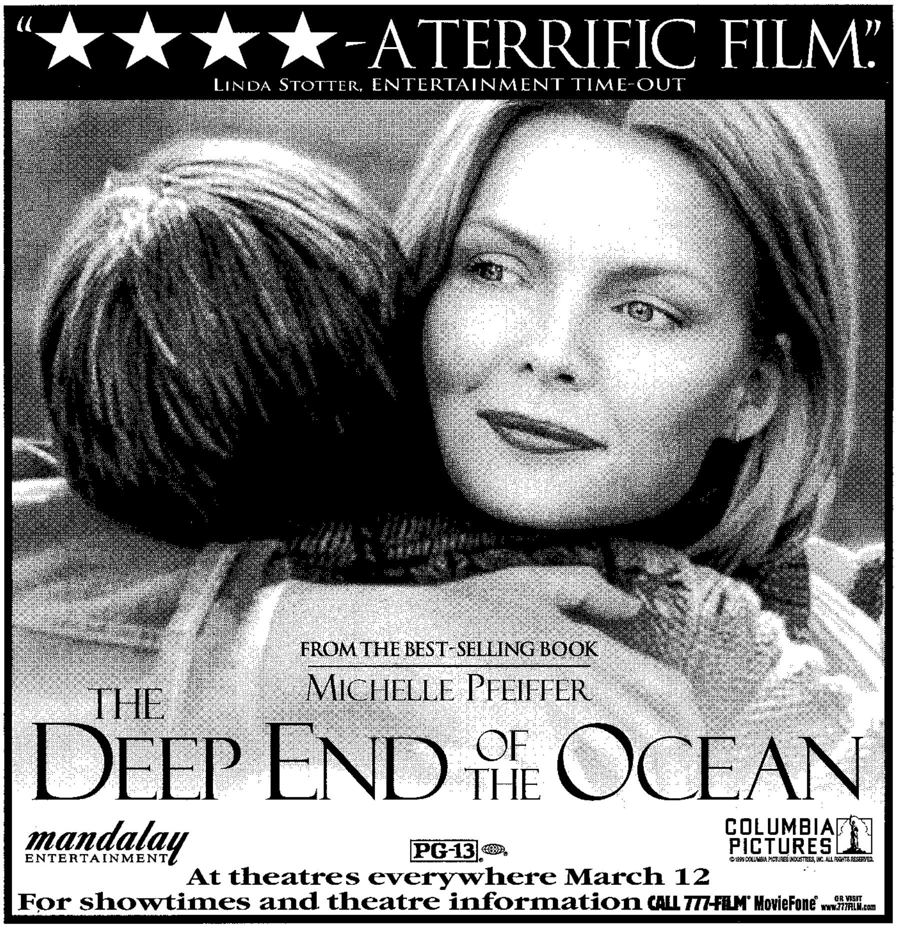
God Said, "Ha!"—Julia Sweeney's monologue on living through her brother's death from cancer. (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG-13) *Film Forum.*

Gods and Monsters—The story of aging director James Whale (Ian McKellen) and his relationship with his lawn boy, played by Brendan Fraser. With Lynn Redgrave. Written and directed by Bill Condon. Based on the novel *Father of Frankenstein.* (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Clearview's Chelsea.*

★**Hands on a Hard Body**—It's about one of those homespun real-life gothic events just crying out to be chronicled. Every year in Longview, Texas—population 70,000—an auto dealership stages a contest in which entrants are required to stand around a fully loaded Nissan hard-body pickup with at least one hand on the truck at all times. The last person standing wins. It's not all that it

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.


"★★★★-A TERRIFIC FILM."
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Solutions to last week's puzzles

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might be, but director Seth Bindler doesn't turn the contestants into freaks or saps. Errol Morris might have turned this subject into a creepy-crawly sideshow, but it's probably best he didn't get wind of it. Weirdness this good deserves the plain treatment. (Rainer; 2/15/99) (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG) *CC Village East.*

The Harmonists—The true story of Germany's half-Jewish, half-Gentile singing group that became popular as Hitler was rising to power. (2 hrs.; NR) *Opens 3/12 at Lincoln Plaza.*

Hilary & Jackie—Emily Watson is the celebrated British cellist Jacqueline du Pré, who developed multiple sclerosis at 28. With Rachel Griffiths as her sister Hilary. Directed by Anand Tucker. (2 hrs.; R) *Clearview's Chelsea; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Jawbreaker—A group of popular girls accidentally kill their best friend and try to cover it up. With Rose McGowan, Rebecca Gayheart, Julie Benz, and Judy Evan Greer. Written and directed by Darren Stein. (1 hr. 25 mins.; R) *Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Crossbay; UA Midway; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Just the Ticket—Andy Garcia is a ticket scalper who has to grow up and get out of the business or lose his girlfriend (Andie MacDowell). With Richard Bradford. (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) *UA Criterion; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**The Last Days**—A superb documentary, directed by James Moll, from the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation centering on testimony from five Hungarian Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. The film's tone is ostensibly inspirational, but what stays with one, too, is the abomination of these people's lives. (Rainer; 2/15/99) (About 2 hrs.; NR) *Clearview's 62nd and Broadway.*

Life Is Beautiful—An Italian Jew and his son are taken to a concentration camp at the end of World War II, and the father attempts to hide the horror through fun and games. Starring Roberto Benigni, Sergio Bustric, Nicoletta Braschi, and Giorgio Cantarini. In Italian, with subtitles. (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; Paris Theatre; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Loews 72nd St. East; Loews 84th Street; Clearview's Cobble Hill; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Main Street Cinemas; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Hylan Plaza.*

Little Voice—A young girl who barely speaks but who can belt out impersonations of singing stars is persuaded to give a concert. Based on the play by Jim Cartwright. Starring Jane Horrocks, Brenda Blethyn, Michael Caine, and Ewan McGregor. Directed by Mark Herman. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *The Screening Room; CC Crown Gotham.*

Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels—See Rainer, page 58. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Message in a Bottle—A bottle washes ashore and a woman reads its contents—a rapturous love letter from a man to the wife he lost. Theresa (Robin Wright Penn), a Chicago *Tribune* researcher, tracks down the man (Kevin Costner), who turns out to be a lovelorn North Carolina boatbuilder and all-around dreamboat. That love letter is purest Hallmark, and so's the movie. Paul Newman, playing the boatbuilder's father, steals what little there is to steal in this bowl of suds. (Rainer; 2/22/99) (2 hrs. 6 mins.; PG-13) *Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

My Favorite Martian—The television show adapted for the screen. With Jeff Daniels, Christopher Lloyd, Elizabeth Hurley, Daryl Hannah, and Wallace Shawn. Directed by Donald Petrie. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) *CC Village East; CC Sutton; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**My Name Is Joe**—Joe (Peter Mullan) is a recovering alcoholic who lives on the dole when he isn't doing odd jobs or coaching a hopeless soccer team of wayward boys from the poorest section of Glasgow. His affair with a health counselor (Louise Goodall) who recognizes his decency is remarkably touching. The director Ken Loach balls up Joe's story into a running-from-the-local-mob conclusion, but Mullan's performance is near-great. He prepares us for everything—Joe's princeliness and lyricism and bullish loyalties. (Rainer; 2/1/99) (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) *Cinema Village.*

October Sky—An inspirational drama without a whit of inspiration about a coal miner's son (Jake Gyllenhaal) who becomes a rocket scientist. The visuals, the dialogue, the sentiments seem lifted right out of the Boy Scouts Handbook. Set during the Sputnik era, it's supposed to be based on a true story, but who can believe it? That's the problem with mediocrity: It makes even verity seem fraudulent. Chris Cooper plays the boy's mine-supervisor father, and he has a few strong moments. (Rainer; 2/22/99) (About 2 hrs.; PG) *CC Village East; Clearview's 34th Street Showplace; Loews 19th St. East; Clearview's Beekman; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Sony Lincoln Square; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Office Space**—Writer-director Mike Judge, creator of *Beavis and Butt-head* and co-creator of *King of the Hill*, makes his live-action-feature debut with this nut-brain piffle. It's almost consistently enjoyable, with a spare, almost abstract visual style that allows us to home in on the gags. It's about white-collar wage slaves at the monolithic Initech Corporation, and Judge gets the corporate details just right: the flat lighting that isolates the workers as if they were lab specimens; the soft tread on acrylic carpet of slit-eyed company honchos; the chirpy secretary whose endlessly repeated telephone greeting has turned her into a human tape loop. At its most inspired, the film is like a variation on Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" for the Dilbert generation. The talented cast includes Ron Livingston, David Herman, and Stephen Root as Milton, a whimpering poor soul who keeps getting marginalized until he's seated in an unlighted cubicle in the basement. (Rainer; 2/22/99) (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG) *Clearview's Chelsea; UA Criterion; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Midway; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Other Sister—A couple's mentally handicapped adult daughter builds a relationship and teaches her parents about life and love. With Diane Keaton, Tom Skerritt, Giovanni Ribisi, and Juliette Lewis. (About 2 hrs.; PG-13) *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea West; CC Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Guild 50th Street; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinemart; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Payback**—As Porter, the thug-on-a-mission, Mel Gibson is as mad as he's been since he was Max. Shot and left for dead after a heist by his double-crossing partner (Gregg Henry), he thinks only of one thing: revenge and getting back his share—$70,000. The insanity of setting himself up as the walking dead for such a paltry sum never penetrates Porter's brain. Brian Helgeland, the gifted screenwriter of *Conspiracy Theory* and (with Curtis Hanson) *L. A. Confidential*, makes his directorial debut and, despite some production disagreements with Gibson that resulted in his walking off the set near the end of the shoot, it's a confident, startlingly funny piece of work. It's a killing comedy not for the squeamish. The terrific cast also includes Maria Bello, David Paymer, William Devane, Kris Kristofferson, and, unbilled, James Coburn. (Rainer; 2/22/99) (2 hrs.; R) *Loews Village; Clearview's 34th Street Showplace; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Astor Plaza; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Relax . . . It's Just Sex—Thirtysomething friends bed-hop until a gay-bashing incident triggers the group's upheaval. With Jennifer Tilly, Lori Petty, Cynda Williams, and Serena Scott Thomas. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Rock the Boat—A gripping documentary in which twelve HIV-positive sailors run the Trans Pacific Yacht Race from Los Angeles to Hawaii. Directed by Bobby Houston. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *CC Village East.*

The RugRats Movie—A new baby joins the Pickles family and sibling rivalry ensues. Based on the animated television show. Directed by Norton Virgien and Igor Kovalyov. (1 hr. 45 mins.; G) *Concourse Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

Rushmore—Fun but overrated. Fifteen-year-old Max Fischer (Jason Schwartzmann) is a tenth-grader at Rushmore Academy who is on sudden-death academic probation despite (or because of) being captain of everything from the drama club to the Double-Team Dodgeball Society. His counterpart is Mr. Blume, a clinically depressed tycoon and the academy's chief benefactor, extremely well played by Bill Murray. Wes Anderson, the co-writer and director, has an affinity for deadpan obsessives and a flukey sense of comic timing. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (2 hrs.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Sutton; Loews State; Sony Lincoln Square; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Pavilion; UA Hylan Plaza.*

★**Saving Private Ryan**—This is a marvelous film, though it needs to be said that the material between the two key battle scenes isn't on their transcendent level. It begins as an epic, changes into an anecdote, and works toward a kind of moral fable. It seems that three brothers from Iowa have been killed; the Army wants the fourth brother, Private Ryan, sent home. When they at last find Ryan (Matt Damon), he doesn't want to be saved. The business of saving a single soldier gets folded into a larger question: What is the value of a decent gesture—any decent ges-

Opening

Mother and Child Reunion

Michelle Pfeiffer is a midwestern mom—Hollywood style—in 'The Deep End of the Ocean,' the story of a woman who loses her son in a crowd and then finds him again nine years later. The movie (starring Pfeiffer and Treat Williams, below) is based on Jacquelyn Mitchard's 1996 blockbuster; it opens Friday, March 12.

Photograph by Eric Lee/Mandalay Entertainment.

ture—in war? (Denby; 7/27/98) (2 hrs. 48 mins.; R) *Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Astoria.*

The School of Flesh—A successful fashion designer falls for a dangerous young bartender. Starring Isabelle Huppert and Vincent Martinez. In French with English subtitles. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Shakespeare in Love—A fanciful romp about the young Will who wrote *Romeo and Juliet* and the romantic liaison that may have led to it. Joseph Fiennes is blandly dashing as the Bard, and Gwyneth Paltrow, as his muse, is blandly pretty. She'd be better off if she didn't keep trying to set herself up as the Grace Kelly of the twentysomething set. She's best when she shows some steel, as in *Hard 8* and *Flesh and Bone.* (Rainer; 12/21/98) (2 hrs.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's 34th Street Showplace; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; UA Criterion; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Sony Lincoln Square; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

She's All That—The senior-class president bets his best friend he can create a prom queen from the frumpiest girl in the school. Starring Freddie Prinze Jr., Jodi Lyn O'Keefe, Matthew Lillard, Usher Raymond, Paul Walker, Rachael Leigh Cook, Kieran Culkin, and Kevin Pollak. (1 hr. 26 mins.; PG-13) *Loews State; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★A Simple Plan—A crashed small plane with 4 million bucks in tow is discovered in a remote game preserve by three local townspeople. Theft, murder, double-crosses ensue. The performances by Bill Paxton and Billy Bob Thornton, playing night-and-day brothers, as well as Brent Briscoe and Bridget Fonda, are superb. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (2 hrs.; R) *Loews Village; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Six Ways to Sunday—A young boy joins the local Jewish crime family and falls for his boss's beautiful maid. With Norman Reedus, Deborah Harry, Elina Lowensohn, Arien Brody, and Isaac Hayes. Directed by Adam Bernstein. (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *CC Angelika Film Center.*

Steam: The Turkish Bath—A man inherits a Turkish bath from his aunt and discovers who she was and falls for the custodian's handsome son. Starring Alessandro Gassman. Directed by Ferzan Opetek. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Tango—A tango dancer falls in love with his beautiful partner and clashes with her gangster boyfriend. With Miguel Àngel Solà and Mia Maestro. In Spanish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 55 mins.; PG-13) *CC Village East; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

The Thin Red Line—Terrence Malick's first movie in twenty years—an adaptation of James Jones's 1962 WWII novel about an Army platoon in Guadalcanal—brings us back to that same seventies fugue state of his in which all action is aestheticized until nothing is left but patterning and pretty pictures. Malick never saw a sunset he didn't want to emblematize. A lot of powerful actors turn up—including Nick Nolte and Sean Penn—but they're upstaged by Malick's froufrou flossiness. The initial battle charge against the Japanese artillery is excitingly staged, and there are some evocative passages, but this seems less a movie about the terrors of combat than a reverie about how to preserve your refinement in the trenches. (Rainer; 1/4/99) (2 hrs. 46 mins.; R) *Clearview's Ziegfeld.*

The 24 Hour Woman—Rosie Perez plays a TV producer for a frenetic morning talk show who finds herself unexpectedly pregnant. The movie is about how this workaholic realizes she's no superwoman. Perez is a pint-size dynamo who doesn't get much support from the other players, including Marianne Jean-Baptiste and Patti Lupone. Co-writer and director Nancy Savoca juices us with real-life dilemmas about career vs. family only to dispel everything in a fairy-tale finale. It's fitting that Jerry Springer puts in an appearance. The movie has all the weight of one of Jerry's "Final Thoughts." (Rainer; 2/2/99) (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Nova; Plaza.*

200 Cigarettes—Another multi-character, multi-plot movie that gives a bad name to the term *Altmanesque.* It's about partygoers in the East Village, 1981, and it features actors you want to see—just not in this thing. Ben Affleck, Courtney Love, Christina Ricci, Janeane Garofalo, and many others turn up. Everybody vamps and preens as if it were amateur night in SoHo. As a disco cabdriver stuck in the seventies, Dave Chappelle has a slithery rap, but, for all its punk trappings, the film is a squeaky-clean affair. (Rainer; 3/8/99) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews State; Loews New York Twin; UA East; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Marboro; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Waking Ned Devine—Two lifelong mates from Tully More—population 52—figure out that one of their neighbors has won the lottery. David Kelly and Ian Bannen are the dynamic duo who connive to get close to the money. They have such an easygoing rapport that you can almost forgive the fact that this film seems to have been produced strictly for the tourist trade. It would make the perfect in-flight movie on AerLingus. (Rainer; 12/4/98) (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG) *Clearview's First & 62nd St.*

Wing Commander—A sci-fi thriller set in 2564 during a war between Earth's forces

Festival

Gifts of the Gab

Okay, so perhaps you've grown a wee bit tired of the mass-marketing of all things Irish: the greenery, the gab, the ubiquitous Guinness. But there's an upside to this cultural push powered by Ireland's new economic strength: It means more well-written Irish movies for us! Or at least American productions with great scenery. As recently as 1993, Ireland produced an average of one film a year; these days, that number is more like fourteen. Last year, we saw *I Went Down, Dancing at Lughnasa, The General, The Boxer, Waking Ned Devine* (though not technically Irish—it was written and directed by a Brit and filmed on the Isle of Mann—it did have a mostly Irish cast). So even if you can't bear another celebration of those aging yet impish McCourt brothers (as seen in the new documentary *The McCourts of New York*), check out the promising lineup at this year's Irish International Film Festival (March 11–14 at the Director's Guild Theater). When you're ready, there will be a movie version of *Angela's Ashes* waiting for you this fall. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

***David Thewlis in the Irish import* Divorcing Jack.**

TITLE	EIRE-CENTRIC PLOT
SWEETY BARRETT	Brendan Gleeson (*The General*) is a simple, honest, mildly retarded man in a town full of thieves and liars. Naturally, he becomes the local hero. A powerful morality tale.
THIS IS MY FATHER	James Caan is a Chicago native who travels to Ireland to learn the story behind an old picture of his mother with a handsome stranger. Aidan Quinn and his brothers Declan and Paul created the story from a tale their mother used to tell. Also starring Brendan Gleeson, Stephen Rea, and the always enchanting Colm Meaney.
DIVORCING JACK (pictured, above)	British actor David Thewlis—of *Naked* fame—is a perpetual drunk and womanizer in a newly independent, terrorist-run Northern Ireland. When he hooks up with a stranger, he finds himself framed for her murder. With Rachel Griffiths (*Hilary and Jackie*).
SOUTHPAW	A documentary of two years in the life of Francis Barrett, a 19-year-old "traveler" and amateur welterweight boxer from Galway. Received a warm welcome at Sundance this year.
THE DISAPPEARANCE OF FINBAR	*Velvet Goldmine* heartthrob and Cork native Jonathan Rhys Meyers played the lead for the very first time in this fantasia about an Irish boy lost to Lapland. Made three years ago, it's showing here for the first time.

and those of another planet. With Matthew Lillard, Freddie Prinze Jr., and Saffron Burrows. Directed Chris Roberts. (1 hr. 33 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 3/12.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Art Greenwich Twin—97 Greenwich Ave. at W. 12th St. (929-3350) *Elizabeth; Rushmore.*

CC Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Affliction; Life Is Beautiful; Shakespeare in Love; Six Ways to Sunday.*

CC Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *American History X; Hands on a Hard Body; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; The Other Sister; Rock the Boat; Tango.*

Cinema Village—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *Conceiving Ada; My Name Is Joe; The School of Flesh.*

Clearview's Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (777-FILM#603) *8 MM.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Dancemaker; God Said, "Ha!".*

Loews Village—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels; Payback; A Simple Plan; 200 Cigarettes.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *Central Station; Dry Cleaning; Gods and Monsters; Relax . . . It's Just Sex; Steam: The Turkish Bath.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *The Celebration; Little Voice; Velvet Goldmine.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (253-2225) *8 MM; Blast From the Past; Cruel Intentions; Elizabeth; Hilary & Jackie; Just the Ticket; Message In a Bottle; Rushmore; Saving Private Ryan; She's All That; The Thin Red Line; 20 Dates.*

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Analyze This; Life Is Beautiful; The Other Sister; Rushmore.*

Clearview's 34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (777-FILM#700) *October Sky; Payback; Shakespeare in Love.*

Clearview's Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#597) *Office Space; 8 MM; Affliction; Cruel Intentions; Gods and Monsters; Hilary & Jackie; Rushmore; Shakespeare in Love; A Simple Plan.*

Clearview's Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#614) *Elizabeth; The Other Sister.*

Loews 19th St. East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Analyze This; Life Is Beautiful; October Sky; Payback; 200 Cigarettes.*

42nd–60th Streets

CC Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *The Other Sister; Shakespeare in Love.*

CC Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Little Voice.*

CC Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Central Station.*

CC Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *My Favorite Martian; Rushmore.*

Clearview's 59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (777-FILM#615) *Israel Film Festival.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Clearview's Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (777-FILM#602) *The Thin Red Line.*

CO Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Analyze This.*

CO Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Enemy of the State; In Dreams; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *The Other Sister.*

Loews Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Payback.*

Loews State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (391-2900) *8 MM; Rushmore; She's All That; 200 Cigarettes.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) *Life Is Beautiful.*

UA Criterion—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Office Space; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Just the Ticket; Shakespeare in Love.*

Opening

Coming Home

In the engaging saga 'Devil's Island,' American and Icelandic cultures clash in fifties Reykjavik when one family—living in the barracks left behind by the Americans after World War II—introduces its community to Elvis and, later, discontent. Fridrik Thor Fridriksson's film opens March 12 at Angelika Film Center.

61st Street and Above, East Side

Clearview's Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (777-FILM#606) *October Sky.*

Clearview's First & 62nd St. —400 E. 62nd St. (777-FILM#957) *Affliction; Cruel Intentions; Elizabeth; Just the Ticket; Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels; Saving Private Ryan; Waking Ned Devine.*

Clearview's Park and 86th St.—125 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#604) *Life Is Beautiful; October Sky.*

Loews 72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Life Is Beautiful.*

Loews New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Payback; 200 Cigarettes.*

Loews Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (828-9738) *8 MM; Analyze This; Blast From the Past; Cruel Intentions; Message In a Bottle; Payback; Shakespeare in Love.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *200 Cigarettes.*

UA Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Office Space; 8 MM; Message In a Bottle.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (777-FILM#864) *The Last Days.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (777-FILM#609) *Analyze This; A Simple Plan.*

Clearview's Olympia—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (777-FILM#613) *8 MM; Shakespeare in Love.*

CO Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Affliction; The Apple; Central Station; Children of Heaven; Hilary & Jackie; The School of Flesh; Tango.*

Loews 84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *8 MM; Blast From the Past; Elizabeth; Life Is Beautiful; Payback.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Analyze This; Blast From the Past; Cruel Intentions; Payback.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Payback; She's All That; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Sony Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *Office Space; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Just the Ticket; Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels; Message In a Bottle; October Sky; The Other Sister; Rushmore; Shakespeare in Love; A Simple Plan; 200 Cigarettes.* IMAX: *T-Rex; Across the Sea of Time; Mark Twain's America; Olympic Glory; Everest.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Jawbreaker; 8 MM; Analyze This; Blast From the Past; Cruel Intentions; Message In a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; The Other Sister; Payback; She's All That; 200 Cigarettes.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Jawbreaker; 8 MM; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; My Favorite Martian; Payback; The RugRats Movie; She's All That.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Jawbreaker; 8 MM; Analyze This; Blast From the Past; Cruel Intentions; My Favorite Martian; The Other Sister; Payback; The Prince of Egypt; Saving Private Ryan; She's All That; 200 Cigarettes.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (623-2770) *Blind Faith; Central Station; Elizabeth; Hilary & Jackie; The School of Flesh; Tango.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *8 mm; My Favorite Martian; Payback.*

Clearview's Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Analyze This; Life Is Beautiful; The Other Sister; Rushmore; Shakespeare in Love.*

CO Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-

Photograph courtesy of Artistic License Films.

FILM#576) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *8 MM; Analyze This; Payback.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (277-0303) *Jawbreaker; 8 MM; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Enemy of the State; Message In a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Payback; The Prince of Egypt; The RugRats Movie; Saving Private Ryan; She's All That; 200 Cigarettes.*

Pavilion—188 Prospect Park West (369-0838) *Office Space; 8 MM; Analyze This; Message In a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; The Other Sister; Payback; Rushmore; Shakespeare in Love; 200 Cigarettes.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; My Favorite Martian; Payback.*

UA Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Analyze This; Just the Ticket; October Sky; 200 Cigarettes.*

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Office Space; 8 MM; Analyze This; Blast From the Past; Cruel Intentions; Life Is Beautiful; Message In a Bottle; The Other Sister; Payback; Shakespeare in Love.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *8 MM; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; My Favorite Martian; Payback; 200 Cigarettes.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Affliction; My Favorite Martian; The Other Sister; Payback; 200 Cigarettes.*

CO Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Payback.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) *8 MM; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Life Is Beautiful; My Favorite Martian; Payback; 200 Cigarettes.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *Little Voice; Waking Ned Devine.*

Plaza—103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Payback; The 24 Hour Woman.*

Sony Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *Call theater for showtimes.*

UA Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Office Space; 8 MM; Analyze This; Blast From the Past; Message In a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; Payback; Saving Private Ryan.*

UA Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *8 MM; Payback; 200 Cigarettes.*

UA Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Jawbreaker; Office Space; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; My Favorite Martian; The Other Sister; She's All That.*

UA Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Jawbreaker; Office Space; 8 MM; Analyze This; Elizabeth; Just the Ticket; Message In a Bottle; October Sky; Saving Private Ryan; Shakespeare in Love.*

UA Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *8 MM; Life Is Beautiful; October Sky; Payback.*

UA Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Office Space; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; The Other Sister; Payback; 200 Cigarettes.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Office Space; 8 MM; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Life Is Beautiful; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; The Other Sister; Payback; The RugRats Movie; Shakespeare in Love.*

UA Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Life Is Beautiful; My Favorite Martian; Payback; Rushmore.*

UA Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Jawbreaker; Office Space; 8 MM; Analyze This; Cruel Intentions; Just the Ticket; Message In a Bottle; My Favorite Martian; October Sky; The Other Sister; Payback; Shakespeare in Love; She's All That; 200 Cigarettes.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Richard Lester Retrospective." Through 3/14: A selection of films by and about the trendsetting director from the sixties. 3/13: *The Bed-Sitting Room* (1969) and *Robin and Marian* (1976). 3/14: *Petulia* (1968) and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1966). Also 3/14: A dialogue with Tony Walton. AMMI: 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4 free.

Anthology Film Archives—"Underground Film Festival." 3/10–3/14: Nine new features, seven new documentaries, and more than 100 new shorts. 3/10: *The Acid House* (1998). Call for complete festival schedule (252-3845). Tickets $7.50. "Dance on Camera Showcase." 3/9: Various silent shorts of dancers. Call Anthology for regular schedule. 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110); $7.

Banff Mountain Film Festival—3/10–3/11: Sixteen mountain and outdoor adventure films from around the world. Tickets $15 at Paragon (871 Broadway), ExtraVertical Climbing Center (61 W. 62nd St.), and at the theater (if available). Theater of New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 W. 64th St. Call 923-9161 for info.

Cinema Classics—Call for schedule. Single or double feature $5. 332 E. 11th St.; call 675-6692 for info.

Clearview's 59th Street East—Israel Film Festival.

A Different Light—3/14: *Frogs* (1972). 7 P.M. 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

East Side Stories—Through 4/17: A showcase of work by new directors from Eastern Europe and the former USSR. Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Auditorium, Brooklyn Museum of Art. Call 718-638-5000, ext. 230, for more info.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—"Rendez-Vous With French Cinema Today." 3/12–3/21: New French films. "Designing Dreams." Through 3/11: A survey of contemporary production and costume design with presentations by those in the forefront of their fields. Call 875-5600 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); regular screenings $8.50–$15.

French Institute—"A Celebration of Marseilles." 3/9: *Nénette et Boni* (1996). 3/16: *Marius et Jeannette* (1997). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7.

Guggenheim Museum—"Documentaries by Jim Dine." 3/9: Three by Dine. Peter B. Lewis Theater, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (423-3587). Tickets free with admission.

Instituto Cervantes—"Spain In European Cinema." 3/11: *Tamaño Natural* (1973). At King Juan Carlos I Center, NYU, 53 Washington Square South. "Cinema Series." 3/12: *La Buena Estrella* (1997). At Instituto Cervantes, 122 E. 42nd St. For more info, call 689-4232.

Irish International Film Festival—3/11–3/14: Eight new films from Ireland. 3/11: *The McCourts of New York* (1998). 3/12: *This Is My Father* (1998). 3/13: *Seed* (1999), *Southpaw* (1998), and *Divorcing Jack* (1998). 3/14: *Break Even* (1998), *The Disappearance of Finbar* (1998), and *Sweety Barrett* (1998). Tickets $10; festival pass is $120. Call 966-3030, ext. 225, for info. All screenings at Directors Guild of America Theater, 110 W. 57th St.

Museum of Jewish Heritage—"Conscience and Courage." Three weekends of heroes of the Holocaust. 3/13: *The Nasty Girl* (1989). 3/14: *Jacob the Liar* (1974) and *The Righteous Enemy* (1987). The NYU Cantor Film Center, 36 E. 8th St. Admission is free, but seating is limited. Make reservations by 3/11 by calling 968-1800, ext. 106.

Museum of Modern Art—"Edward G. Robinson Retrospective." Through 4/12: Highlights from the actor's career. "BritDoc: A History of British Documentary Film." Through 3/22: A 27-part survey of classic and unknown British documentaries from 1906 to 1986. "Big as Life: An American History of 8 mm Films." 3/11: Films by Dick. "Cineprobe." 3/15: Short films by Beauvais. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

New York Public Library—"The Cult Film." 3/10: *Street of Crocodiles* (1986). "Asian Women Filmmakers." 3/11: *Body, Soul and Voice* (1992), *Mixed Blood* (1992), and *Flow* (1993). Donnell Media Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Ocularis—Call for schedule. 70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn. $5. Call 718-388-8713 for info.

The Screening Room—3/13: Special brunch and appearance by film composer John Barry, with 1 P.M. screening of *Midnight Cowboy.* Sunday brunch: *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). Call theater for info. 54 Varick St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for Sunday brunch patrons).

Tonic—"Monday Night Film Series." 3/8: *George* (1997). 3/15: *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928). Tickets $4. 107 Norfolk St. For more info, call 358-7503.

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 3/13–3/14: *Sanjuro* (1962). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.

Series

Bleak New World

Filmmakers from seven countries share their vision of life in the millennium in "2000 Seen By," a series of one-hour films showing as double features at Cinema Village beginning March 12. The sometimes bleak plots include friends exiling themselves to a tropical island (by France's Laurent Cantet), a type-A Jesus Christ working harder than a media mogul (*Book of Life*, starring P. J. Harvey and Martin Donovan, above, by Hal Hartley), and a Belgian chips-stand owner who finds himself fighting a linguistic civil war (Alain Berliner of *Ma Vie en Rose*). See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

Photograph courtesy of Fox Lorber Features.

theater

Channing and Fishburne in *Lion*...Rashad

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Closer—A glamorous cast (including Natasha Richardson and Rupert Graves) explores fashionable interrelated topics (love, deceit, and sexual jealousy) in this blunt, sourly amusing Olivier-award-winning play by Patrick Marber. $15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Previews begin 3/9 for a 3/25 opening. *Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion in Winter—Laurence Fishburne and Stockard Channing, Tony winners both, star in James Goldman's famous drama about royal-family squabbling. Michael Mayer directs. $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/11 opening. *Roundabout's Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Night Must Fall—Another Broadway revival of an old spine-tingler, this time with Matthew Broderick as the charming sociopath. Judy Parfitt plays the elderly English woman who employs him, J. Smith-Cameron plays her niece, and John Tillinger directs. $25–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opens 3/8. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Via Dolorosa—A meditation on the Palestine question, written and performed by David Hare. $35–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 3/18 opening. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Now Playing

Annie Get Your Gun—Bernadette Peters plays the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover, Frank Butler (played by Tom Wopat), in Buffalo Bill's traveling Wild West Show. Irving Berlin did the lyrics and score; Peter Stone updated the book. $35–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (307-4100).*

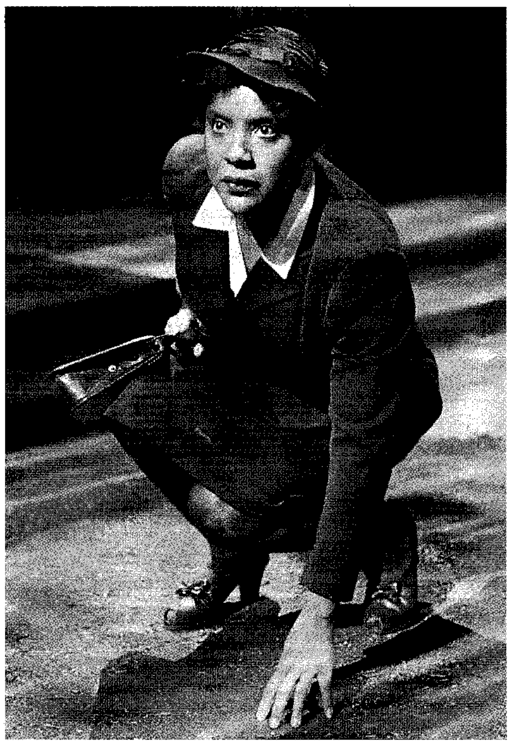
Art—I sympathize with this play by Yasmina Reza. The plot is simple. Serge spends 200,000 francs on a five-by-four painting by the renowned Antrios that is all white except for some diagonal scratches. His friend Marc considers this Antrios shit, and Serge's purchase of it an insult to their friendship. He tries to enlist the third of our musketeers, Yvan, to side with him. But confronted with Serge and the painting, Yvan does what he does best: He wavers. Reza's cunning dialogue has been fluently Englished by Christopher Hampton. (Simon: 3/16/98 and 10/5/98.) Now with Judd Hirsch, Joe Morton, and George Wendt. $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 3/1/98. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Band in Berlin—A new musical about the Comedian Harmonists, a German sextet that rose to prominence in the twenties but collapsed by the mid-thirties, when the Nuremberg Laws required the three Jewish members to leave the group. Written by Susan Feldman; performed by real-life sextet Hudson Shad. $65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Andrea McArdle plays the girl; James Barbour plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony-award-winning costumes by Ann Hould-Ward; lyrics by Tim Rice and Howard Ashman; music by Alan Menken. $22.50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

Opening
Eyes Were Watching

Thulani Davis reimagines the trial of Ruby McCollum, a married black woman who shot the most prominent white doctor in Live Oak, Florida, and the media coverage provided by Zora Neale Hurston, celebrated social critic and novelist. And who better to play Hurston than Phylicia Rashad? Everybody's Ruby opens March 9 at the Public Theater.



Photograph by Michal Daniel.

The Beauty Queen of Leenane—Martin McDonagh's Drama Desk Award–winning drama about an old woman's attempts to sabotage her daughter's love life. $20–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Robert Brill resuscitates a very functional but also eye-catching set. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. Joe Masteroff's refurbished book emphasizes the squalor of 1930 Berlin nightlife and the bisexuality of Clifford, the writer hero. The supporting cast delivers staunchly. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Starring Alan Cumming. $25–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (239-6200).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $40–$75. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Minimalism prevails in this production. All is concise, calibrated, calculated, but nothing is stinted on. Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two with sprightly kittenishness and superhuman timing. But Karen Ziemba, a lovely dancer and likable singer, radiates innocent chirpiness that is all wrong for Roxie, so magisterially created by Ann Reinking. (Simon: 11/30/98.) $20–$75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Death of a Salesman—This *Salesman* is a hard but efficacious sell. "I sell, therefore I am" is the neo-Cartesian maxim Willy is meant to embody and explicate. Rightly, Miller embeds this value system in a business, social, and family context, but the interaction of the elements is achieved more by contrivance than by a sense of the inevitable. Yet most of the acting is splendid. Brian Dennehy is a man truly at the end of his tether, letting us in on every step of his decline via naïve optimism, disregard of reality, aging, and capitalist callousness. Elizabeth Franz settles into a quietly and thoroughly moving Linda. Kevin Anderson welds Biff's duality as unmoored drifter and canny *raisonneur* into a totally believable and heartrending amalgam. (Simon: 2/22/99.) $45–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

Electra—Zoë Wanamaker plays Agamemnon's grieving, vengeful daughter in this new production of Sophocles' play, ably adapted by Frank McGuinness, who updated last season's Tony-winning *A Doll's House.* Also starring Claire Bloom. $35–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon, sadly, is not a part of this maxi-musical adaptation of the 1984 movie, but the lead does have his haircut. Let's hear it for the boy! $20–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 10/22/98. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago.* $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, music by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean;

the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. And Taymor has found ways to transmute the strictly cartoonish bravura of the big-screen Lion King onto a stage so that nothing is lost in translation. (Simon: 12/1/97). $20–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4747).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly,* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, is now one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Music by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200).*

Not About Nightingales—Vanessa Redgrave salvaged this Tennessee Williams play, written by the author when he was 26 and then summarily discarded; her brother, Corin, stars in it, and Trevor Nunn directs. It tells the story of a young prisoner who falls in love with the warden's secretary and must choose sides when his peers rebel. $65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Circle-in-the-Square Theatre, 1633 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Nine leads and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Ragtime—A musical based on E. L. Doctorow's historical novel, with a book by Terrence McNally and music by the composer-lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. The epic braids the fates of three fictitious families—one black, one Jewish, one Wasp—and an assortment of historical characters. $31–$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Scarlet Pimpernel—The show about romance, honor, the French Revolution, and, most important, fabric. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton has recently revised her book, adapted from Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Douglas Sills stars. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Side Man—*A must.* This enjoyable play by Warren Leight is about sidemen, yesteryear's second-tier jazz musicians who hired out as supplementary players to various bands, and about their women. It is narrated by Clifford, the son of Gene, a trumpet player, and Terry, a sweet thing turned bitter. As the play moves from 1985 to 1953 and back, we hear about his parents' courtship, his birth, and the parents' growing estrangement as he grows up. We also get glimpses of the lives of Gene's fellow sidemen. As things move near-imperceptibly from comedy to drama, we relish the jive, the jokes, the frustrations enacted by seven actors in a production neatly tied together by Michael Mayer's apt direction. (Simon: 3/23/98.) Now with Christian Slater. $25–$60. Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the songbook Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller wrote to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh.

The Sound of Music—Returns to Broadway for the

Opening
Beached Wail

***Betty's Summer Vacation,* the latest chaos comedy by Christopher Durang, is a work of such exquisite depravity it should keep his armchair therapists busy for years. (Hamptons haters will probably like it, too.) Opens March 14 at Playwrights Horizons; Nicholas Martin directs.**

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

"A BEAUTIFULLY ACTED, FINELY OBSERVED COMEDY-DRAMA. HILARIOUS!"
—Peter Marks,
The New York Times

SNAKEBIT

Telecharge: 212-239-6200
The Century Center
111 East 15th Street

first time since its 1959 premiere. Hum along; bring the kids. Rebecca Luker, who played a memorable Magnolia in *Show Boat,* plays the nun turned governess, and Richard Chamberlain plays the widower captain. $30–$75. Tues. at 8, Thurs. at 7, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/12/98. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown—Happiness is the revival of this musical, directed by Michael Mayer and starring Anthony Rapp. The book, lyrics, and music are by Clark Gesner, based on Charles M. Schulz's *Peanuts* comic strip. $15–$75. Tues.–Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 1 and 5:30. *Ambassador Theatre, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

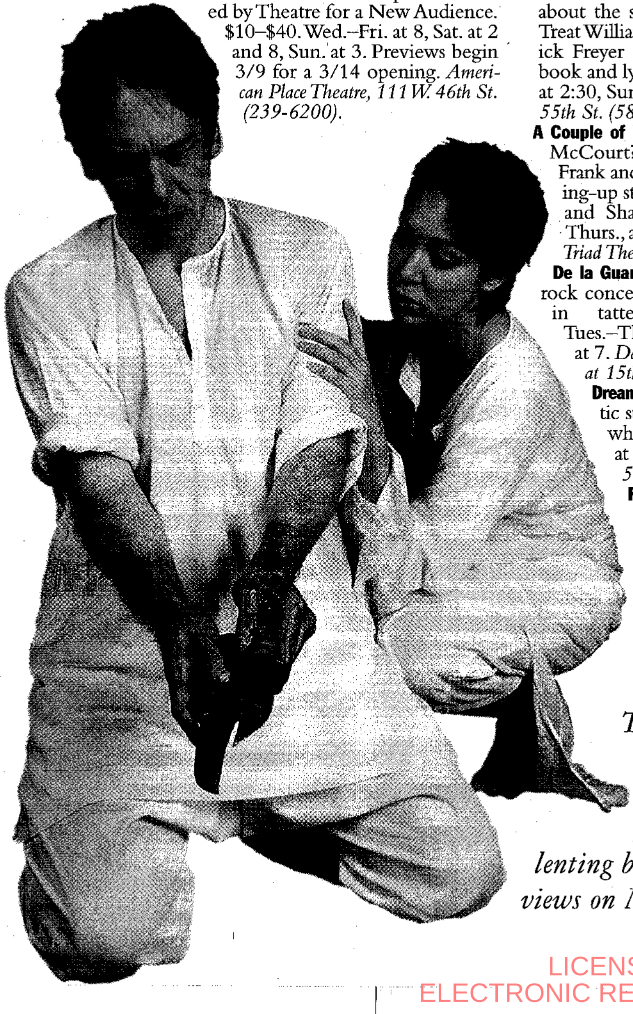
Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Betty's Summer Vacation—A sicko new play by Christopher Durang *(Sex and Longing, Baby With the Bathwater)* about a summer sojourn gone awry. Nicholas Martin directs. $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 3/14 opening. Through 3/28. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Everybody's Ruby—Phylicia Rashad plays Zora Neale Hurston in this new Thulani Davis play about Ruby McCollum, a married black woman who shot the most prominent white doctor in Live Oak, Florida, amid allegations of a sex scandal. $40. Tues., Wed., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opens 3/8. *Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Macbeth—Bill Camp sees the dagger before him; Elizabeth Marvel, a whiz at playing tough broads, tries to out that damned spot. Presented by Theatre for a New Audience. $10–$40. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 3/9 for a 3/14 opening. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*



Red—Chay Yew's new play about a best-selling American author who returns to China to do research for her new book. $36. Tues.–Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 3 and 7:30, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/23 opening. *Manhattan Theatre Club, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Thwak—The latest bit of slapstick buffoonery from the Umbilical Brothers, a well-matched but unrelated pair of kinetic Australians. $25–$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8. In previews for a 3/18 opening. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (307-4100).*

Turn of the Screw—Jeffrey Hatcher's adaptation of the Henry James mystery at Bly Manor. Starring Enid Graham. $30–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 3/10 for a 3/24 opening. Through 4/16. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

Now Playing

Ashes to Ashes—David Strathairn stars in this 1996 Harold Pinter play about a marriage in crisis. $24–$48. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Through 5/9. *Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (777-4900).*

Beautiful Thing—Jonathan Harvey's 1993 play (and, later, acclaimed film) about two working-class teenage boys who fall in love. $45–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

Bright Lights, Big City—A new musical by Paul Scott Goodman, based on Jay McInerney's 1984 novel about a callow young New Yorker's descent into cocaine hell. Directed by Michael Greif (*Rent*). $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 8. *New York Theatre Workshop, 29 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

Captains Courageous, The Musical—As the title says, the musical version of the Rudyard Kipling novel about the spoiled son of a wealthy industrialist. Treat Williams and Brandon Espinoza star; Frederick Freyer did the music; Patrick Cook did the book and lyrics. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 4. *Manhattan Theatre Club, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

A Couple of Blaguards—Tired yet of the brothers McCourt? Good! We thought not. Come see Frank and Malachy's stage version of their growing-up story, performed by actors Mickey Kelly and Shay Duffin. $40–$42.50. Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

De la Guarda—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Dress in tatters; bring aspirin. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (239-6200).*

Dream City Twosome—Tony Howarth's romantic story about a vagabond and a pretty girl who lives in a park. $35. Wed.-Sat at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/28. *Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. (581-4125).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Far East—A new play from A. R. Gurney about a young American Navy lieutenant who finds himself caught between the wife of his commanding officer and the woman he loves. Directed by Daniel Sullivan; starring Michael Hayden. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 6/6. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up!—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8:15, Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

Halfway Home—Diane Bank's new play about a Manhattan tour-bus guide who returns to the Iowa family she spurned ten years before. Presented by the New Group. $15–$30. Mon. at 7, Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 8. *Theater at St. Clements, 423 W. 46th St. (279-4200).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—Michael Cerveris stars in John Cameron Mitchell's stunning rock concert-cum-musical, in which a German transsexual achieves self-actualization, not to mention tabloid fame, through songwriting. $20–$49.50. Mon., Wed., and Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 8 and 11, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (239-6200).*

The Hothouse—The Atlantic Theater Company revives Harold Pinter's 1958 comedy about a group of muddling bureaucrats in an unspecified government institution. $35–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 7. *Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—A musical revue about an amusingly quaint subject: heterosexual love. $47.50–$50. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

James Naughton: Street of Dreams—It's two hours of crooning from the two-time Tony marvy James Naughton. $50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 4/11. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Killer Joe—Tracy Letts's new (and first) play about a dysfunctional family in a Texas trailer park. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

The Mineola Twins—Swoosie Kurtz stars in this new play by Paula Vogel, author of the Pulitzer-winning *How I Learned to Drive,* about womanhood in suburbia. Directed by Joe Mantello. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Roundabout Theatre Company, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-9300).*

The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told—The newest play by Paul Rudnick, wicked author of *Addams Family Values, In & Out,* and various bits of acclaimed gay fantasia. In the author's words: "It's a comedy about God, if that's not redundant." $35–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. (420-8000).*

The Mystery of Irma Vep—The late Charles Ludlam's penny-dreadful vehicle for himself, Everett Quinton, and a glistening mound of wigs. It was a loopy sensation in 1984; Quinton returns for this repeat engagement with Stephen DeRosa. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Westside Theater, 407 W. 43nd St. (239-6200).*

Opening

Skittish Play

Theatre for a New Audience has been itching to do 'Macbeth' for years, but the petty pace of progress didn't ease until this spring, when the whole project finally came together. Bill Camp sees daggers before him; Elizabeth Marvel, the mistress of tough and unrelenting broads, tries to rout out that damned spot. The production begins previews on March 9 and opens March 14 at the American Place Theatre.

Photograph by Gerry Goodstein.

Opening

The First Wives' Club

The tougher Stockard Channing gets, the easier she is to adore—at her best, she wears irony and scorn like a shiny breastplate, but you know she's crumbling underneath. In *The Lion in Winter,* opening at the Roundabout Theatre this Thursday, Channing plays the role she was born for: Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry II's banished queen. She's a bitter, fading beauty, an untamed shrew; and yet she clearly loves her husband beyond expression. The king (played by Laurence Fishburne) has already traded her in for a mere babe, but you can tell he still cares for the old girl. As Channing puts it: "She's smart—and besides, who else is he going to talk to?" The royal pair spend the entire evening scheming at cross-purposes: she to put her eldest son on the throne and retain the Aquitaine, he to coronate his youngest and wrest away her land. The late James Goldman wrote the play more than 30 years ago, and it takes place more than 800 years ago, yet it has all the dysfunctional lunacy of any work by Nicky Silver; the knives go in clean and deep. "Actually," says Channing, "the family is beyond dysfunctional. They vibrate at a frequency that's hysterical." Theatergoers ought to dispense with any hope of following all the intricacies of the real-estate and succession battles. The program provides no family trees, and it's not really the point anyway. The idea is to bask in the language, the quips, and the unconcealed tensions between family members. "It's basically about everybody screwing everybody over," says Channing. "They're sick, they're outrageous, they're completely unedited. This is their TV . . . and she, she's living like a parasite on this sickness and, oddly, thriving." So is Channing. For an actress, this role offers the rare opportunity to roam over all eight octaves. "If you're doing it right, it turns you inside out," she says. "We high-five each other backstage. It's like a giant jolt of wasabi." **JENNIFER SENIOR**

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

Oh, Coward!—Oh, the potential! A musical revue based on the life and works of Noël Coward. $30–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Over the River and Through the Woods—A new comedy from Joe DiPietro about the efforts of four Italian-American grandparents to change their grandson's life. $45. Mon., Tues. , Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Oy!—A new comedy by Rich Orloff showing the effects of Yiddish words on contemporary life. With original music by Greg Pliska and a live klezmer duo. Presented by Melting Pot Theatre. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Theater 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (279-4200).*

Paradise Hotel—The latest from Richard Foreman, this time about a group of paranoid sexual adventurers who converge in their quest for Nirvana and fine lodging. $15. Tues. and Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 4/19. *Ontological Theatre at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (533-4650).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Rollin' on the T.O.B.A.—A songful tribute to the last days of black vaudeville, when African-Americans toured the 80-house circuit with their white brethren but were often denied pay and lodging. Conceived and written by Ronald "Smokey" Stevens and Jaye Stewart. $38.50–$42.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

The Seagull—Pearl Theatre Company takes a crack at Chekhov's classic. $20–$33. Tues. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. *Pearl Theatre Company, 80 St. Marks Pl. (598-9802).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, this show by a number of hands pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan. Even the Ca*th*tilian li*th*p ge*th* a tuneful *th*ong tribute. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $20–$47.50; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Ibis Theatre, 321 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Snakebit—After a limited run in a tiny space, David Marshall Grant's play—about a neurotic actor, his fretting wife, and their freshly dumped friend—gets the theater and open-ended engagement it deserves. Naked Angels presents. $17.50–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. (239-6200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, an energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

This Is Our Youth—Kenneth Lonergan's play is one that young people will adore and their elders embrace. It concerns smooth Dennis, a school dropout and drug dealer; his friend the dopey and klutzy Warren Straub, who shows up with a suitcase full of his prized possessions plus fifteen grand he swiped from his remarried old man; and Jessica Goldman, a stylish and mildly promiscuous design student. A world is conjured up—a world observed and overheard with spine-tingling accuracy and scalpel-like penetration. Mark Ruffalo is the perfect Warren. Missy Yager is a gem of a Jessica. Mark Brokaw's direction remains exemplary. And when the comedy eventually turns serious, the transition is flawless and shattering. (Simon: 11/16/98.) $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie Black's Vegas Room, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(239-6200).*

Wit—Can a play be made out of the last hours of a professor of literature dying of ovarian cancer? A play that hinges on a close reading of Donne's *Holy Sonnets*? That, without slighting its seriousness, sees the comedy in dying? No? Think again: Margaret Edson, with her firstling effort, has managed it, and more. It is a dazzling and humane play you will remember till your dying day, and especially then, thanks also to a near-flawless production. First, Kathleen Chalfant, a Vivian Bearing of power and vulnerability, commanding intelligence and compelling irony. Add a supporting cast in which all shine. For this play alone, Edson should be handed the Harvard English department. (Simon: 9/28/98.) $35–$49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (307-4100).*

Off-Off Broadway

Admissions—A drama about a hostile student takeover of a university president's office to protest tuition hikes. Directed by Austin Pendleton. $15. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/28. *Blue Heron Theatre, 121 E. 24th St. (332-0027).*

American Vaudeville Theatre—A hodgepodge of circus acts, stand-up, comedy, folk music, and exhibitionist freaks. $4–$8. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sat. and Sun. at 4. Through 4/11. *Nada, 167 Ludlow St. (420-1466).*

Bad Reputation—Penny Arcade's paean to bad girls. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 8:30. Through 3/21. *P.S. 122, 150 First. Ave., at 9th St.(477-5288).*

Children of the House Afire—A new musical drama about interracial relationships, gentrification, and changing times. Book and lyrics by D. H. Melhem, based on her poetry; music by Grenoldo Frazier. $10. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. *Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. (254-1109).*

Clarence Darrow Tonight!—Laurence Luckinbill's one-man play about the maverick defense lawyer. $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/21. *Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. (247-4982).*

Cruel and Barbarous Treatment—The Culture Project, which pulled off the successful stage adaptation of Isherwood's *Prater Violet*, now tries its hand at two short stories by Mary McCarthy and one by John Cheever. $25. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *The Salon, 432 E. 91st St. (279-4200).*

He Who Says Yes/He Who Says No—Rarely performed companion works by Bertolt Brecht, in which a young boy must decide whether to sacrifice his life for the ailing people of his village. Performed by the venerable National Asian American Theatre Company. $15. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Connelly Theatre, 220 E. 4th St. (623-1672).*

Ichabod Revealed—*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,* as in-

Gross *continued from page 35*

senting whom. When Rubenstein's pal Jack Newfield wrote a blistering attack on club owner Peter Gatien, who'd been identified as a Howard client in Neal Travis's column in the *Post,* Howard told me Gatien was actually a Richard client. Then he told me Richard would be quitting the account. I, unfortunately, was the one who told Gatien. Later, Richard said he would still help Gatien out but would no longer take his money.

"It took a while till he figured out his love for independence," Howard had said of Richard a few days before. "I don't tell him what to do. And I don't think I've met many of his clients."

Rubenstein likes to take credit when things go right, but as in his dealings with Gatien, he distances himself from problems. When he suspects clients aren't forthcoming, he'll be sure their statements are in their own words (which may be why, when Naomi Campbell denied a suicide attempt confirmed by others, Rubenstein's statement attributed the denial to her). And when clients are simply an embarrassment, he'll either forget them or foist the blame on one of his employees. He uses both techniques when I ask about his representation of the group dubbed the Gang of Four, who bought Roosevelt Raceway on Long Island with government loans and a promise to keep it operating, but were then embroiled in scandal when they suddenly reversed course, closed the track, and sought to develop it for a huge profit. "I've never worked for them," Rubenstein says at first. "I couldn't even name their names." But he soon amends that. "I wasn't personally involved, but my company could have been."

WHICH BRINGS US BACK, FINALLY, TO THE embarrassing client Rubenstein *can't* get away from. Yankees memorabilia is all around Rubenstein's office, and he wears a huge team-championship ring, just like a player. Rubenstein won't say much about his work for the Yankees' owner, whose ability to attract attention and talent to the Yankees is almost matched by his talent for putting his foot in his mouth. "I don't think I've ever discussed my strategy or Steinbrenner's strategy," Rubenstein says. "I just execute for George. George is his own man. Clearly. You ask anybody. Steinbrenner sets his own policies. Rubenstein is his spokesman. I am not his business adviser!" He laughs loudly. "They're their own persons, all of the highly successful people that I work for."

"Do they listen to you?" I ask.

"Sometimes yes, sometimes no," he says twice.

"Do you ever say no to them?"

"You bet. I'm not fearful of giving them a straight answer. I am not a yes man. And that's why I think George likes me and trusts me."

"But he might disregard your advice?"

"Yes," Rubenstein answers. "We have a discussion, and then I say what he wants me to say."

On November 4, the Boss wanted him to say why the Yankees hadn't exercised their 1999 option on Darryl Strawberry, who'd just had surgery for colon cancer. Mike Lupica, the *Daily News* sports columnist, had taken off on Steinbrenner for not giving the ailing slugger his $2.5 million. The Boss wanted it known that Strawberry owed so much in back taxes and alimony that his creditors would take anything the Yankees paid him—and not only that, Major League Baseball would hit the Yankees with a "luxury" surcharge if Strawberry got all that green. The Boss wanted to work things out for everyone's profit. And he obviously didn't want to say that to Lupica, who has a history of insufficient reverence toward him.

So the next day, Rubenstein called the *Daily News* and asked for Debby Krenek, the editor. "He said he had information about Darryl Strawberry that was hot," she recalls. So she sent him where he should have gone in the first place, to the sports editor, who put him on the phone with reporter Peter Botte. "I thought they'd say, 'He'll take care of Strawberry,' " Botte says. Instead, he got an earful about Strawberry's debts—which Rubenstein vastly inflated. "I asked him, 'Is this on the record?' " Botte continues. "He said, 'Yeah.' " A few minutes later, Lupica got a full report. But he and Botte thought the call so peculiar that Botte called back to be sure it had really been Rubenstein. The next day the *News* ran three pages of coverage, with stories by Botte and Lupica, a back-page photo of Steinbrenner, and the headline A NEW LOW. Good publicity.

Now, Rubenstein says the incident was "unfairly reported," but admits, "Perhaps I was not as articulate as I should have been. Certainly I wasn't consciously hurtful. It's possible I was clumsy. But I would imagine if you asked the *Daily News* on balance whether I'm skilled or not, they would think I'm skilled. They can't say I'm a jerk."

Actually, Mike Lupica says worse, even if an acknowledgment is buried in his criticism. "It's astonishing that such a big guy in New York, a guy who's supposed to be so scary, could do something that monumentally stupid," Lupica says. "It's like in sports. Look at the field. You don't need anybody to tell you when a pitcher has lost his fastball." ■

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terpreted by the Elementals, the puppet theater troupe of Bunkuru specialists. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 8:30. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

Jodie's Body—Aviva Jane Carlin's acclaimed one-woman show about art, femininity, and South Africa. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 8, Sun. at 2. *Arc Light Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. (595-0355).*

The Lone Runner: The Mythical Life Journey of Nikola Tesla—A new puppetry work by Jane Catherine Shaw about the life and times of the pioneering electrical engineer, whose career was overshadowed by the accomplishments of Edison. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 8. Through 3/21. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (475-7710).*

Making Faces—Christine Howey, née Richard Howey, describes how she became a woman, both surgically and otherwise. $12. Daily at 8, plus Sun. at 2. Through 3/14. *Phil Bosakowski Theatre, 354 W. 45th St. (592-3675).*

Manhunt—An excuse for Premium Bob, the bizarre comedy duo, to crawl the caverns of the American psyche and to invent some great characters—including a group of "karaokalists." $12. Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7:30 and 10. Through 3/18. *Kaufman Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (216-9596).*

A Mom's Life—Kathryn Grody's amusing tales from the trenches about raising kids. $35. Sun. at 4 and 7:30, Mon. at 8, Wed. at 2:30. *ArcLight Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. (307-4100).*

Monday Night Magic—Internationally known magicians munch on glass, puncture flailing assistants with swords, yank rabbits from hats, etc., all in an intimate setting. $20–$27.50. Mon. at 8. *Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (307-4100).*

Night of 1,000 Heels—A new all-gal musical comedy in the spirit of Bob Hope films and the revues of the High Heeled Women. Written by Cassandra Danz, Mary Fulham, and Warren Leight, author of *Side Man*. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 5. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (475-7710).*

Running Man—The second collaboration between jazz composer Diedre Murray and Pulitzer finalist Cornelius Eady, which again examines the contemporary African-American family. $20. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 8, Sun. at 6. Through 3/14. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave. (647-0202).*

The Seagull—As interpreted by Target Margin Theater, which seldom interprets anything predictably. $12–$15. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 3/20. *Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. (358-3657).*

Symphonie Fantastique—Puppeteer Basil Twist dances his fanciful puppets around a 500-gallon tank. $25. Tues.–Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 10:30, Sun. at 5. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (647-0202).*

Tokyo Can Can 2—A musical based on playwright-director Yutaka Okada's experiences as a young boy growing up in postwar Japan. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/27. *American Theatre of Actors, 314 W. 54th St. (307-4100).*

Trapped in Seven—Dancer-choreographer-performer Fay Simpson presents her one-woman show about living with HIV. $12. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 3/13. *Acting Studio, 29 E. 19th St. (228-2700).*

2½ Jews—A comedy about a prominent civil-rights attorney's relationships with his irascible father and lawyer son. By Alan Brandt. $32.50. Wed. at 3 and 8:30, Sat. at 5 and 8:30, Sun. at 2. *Raymond J. Greenwald Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (239-6200).*

Winterset—Cocteau Rep. performs Maxwell Anderson's play about a man determined to avenge the death of his father, executed for a murder he never committed. $12–$30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery. (677-0060).*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

art

Lewis Carroll...Picasso in Clay

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Helen Frankenthaler/Anne Peretz—Abstract paintings from 1974 to 1995/New paintings of Cape Cod landscapes. Through 3/27. Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (879-6606).

Robert Jessup—New paintings in which enigmatic narratives are acted out by iconic figures; through 4/3. Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave. (924-0858).

Tom Leaver—Landscape paintings whose surfaces emphasize the processes through which they were made, among them the artist's use of his hands to apply paint to canvas; through 3/27. Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767).

Donald Sultan—New paintings of floating objects and landscapes with birds; through 3/27. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (749-0550).

Don Van Vliet—Recent works on paper; through 3/26. Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (988-1623).

Beatrice Wood—A survey of drawings, watercolors, and lithographs organized by Francis M. Naumann, a Dada scholar who has written extensively about the artist; through 4/10. Moeller, 167 E. 73rd St. (988-4500).

57th Street Area

Michael Byron—New paintings inspired by photographs of twentieth-century figurative sculptures; through 4/17. Baron/Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. (581-9191).

David Dewey—Large-scale watercolors of New England architecture and seascapes; through 3/31. Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (664-0907).

Richard Diebenkorn—Paintings and works on paper from the artist's "Ocean Park" series; through 3/20. Rubin Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave. (445-0444).

Richard Fleischner—Drawings, photographs, paintings, and sculpture documenting the artist's 25-year exploration of the concepts of the "maze" and the "square"; through 3/20. Danese, 41 E. 57th St. (223-2227).

Mark Francis—New paintings of cellular forms that appear to vibrate; through 3/20. Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (752-2929).

Marsden Hartley—The first-ever exhibition devoted exclusively to the lithographs made by the American artist while he was living in Berlin in 1923; through 4/9. Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave. (767-1852).

Joyce Kozloff—A series of eight-by-ten-inch frescoes inspired by the inaccuracies found by the artist on early maps; through 3/27. Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (247-2111).

Leonid Lerman—Recent sculptures in stone, wood, metal plating, and other media that continue the artist's metaphorical exploration of the Trojan War; through 4/10. McKee, 745 Fifth Ave. (688-5951).

Robert Natkin—Recent abstract paintings; through 4/17. Reece, 24 W. 57th St. (333-5830).

Dennis Oppenheim—Recent sculpture, video, and documentation of large-scale outdoor projects from 1996 to the present; through 3/27. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Pablo Picasso and Katsushika Hokusai—An exhibit pairing Picasso's erotic etchings from "Suite 347" with Hokusai's erotic woodcut prints from the album *Azumanishiki*, circa 1810; through 4/10. Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St. (265-8876).

Doug Safranek—Paintings of views from the artist's Williamsburg rooftop; through 3/27. Schmidt-Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (888-1122).

Jon Schueler—A two-gallery survey of paintings by the artist (1916–92), through 3/27, at ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (644-8300) and Perlow, 41 E. 57th St. (644-7171).

Thomas Schütte/Joseph Bartscherer—Painted ceramic sculptures of eggs/Color photographs from the series "Canal." Through 4/3. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (977-7160).

Billy Sullivan—Paintings, drawings, and photographs that depict the artist's downtown studio and the comings and goings of his creative friends; through 3/27. Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (759-2345).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Donald Baechler—Recent paintings that combine images derived from store signage from Morocco, Mexico, and India; through 4/10. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

John Beerman/Tom Slaughter—Recent paintings of pastoral landscapes/Paintings that mix historical images of New York City with contemporary references. Through 4/3. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (219-2863).

Barbara Bloom—*The French Diplomat's Office,* an installation of the artist's three-dimensional interpretation of a watercolor that appears to depict an interior decorator's rendering of an office; through 4/24. Blum, 99 Wooster St. (343-0441).

John Bock—An installation of costumes, objects, and props derived from an action performed by the artist; through 3/27. Kern, 558 Broadway (965-1706).

Steven Brower—*Utility,* a project that makes use of the gallery's heat, electrical, telephone, and waste disposal systems; through 4/3. Lombard Freid, 470 Broome St. (334-5060).

Mary Ellen Carroll—New prints, photographs, and sculpture that investigate the relationship between writing and twentieth-century architecture; through 3/27. Taylor/TZ' Art, 470 Broome St. (966-9059).

Daisy Craddock—Paintings of southern landscapes based on the artist's memory and visits to her hometown of Memphis, Tennessee; through 4/3. Pelavin, 13 Jay St. (925-9424).

Matthew Cusick—Recent hard-edge paintings; through 4/3. Kent, 67 Prince St. (966-4500).

John Kalymnios—New photographs and sculptures that continue the artist's exploration of optical psychology; through 4/3. Golden, 39 Wooster St. (274-0080).

Samm Kunce—An installation of two large sand dunes covered in dune grass; through 4/3. Gibson, 568 Broadway (925-1192).

Charles Luce—Works on paper that use Asian maps and game paper as a ground and explore the image of the stone as a cosmological marker of space and time; through 4/17. Ross, 568 Broadway (343-2161).

Malcolm Morley—New paintings that develop the artist's characteristic range of subject matter—ships, vintage airplanes, disaster scenes at sea—and

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Photography
Minor Distractions

In 1947, the photography historian Helmut Gernsheim determined that an album of prints previously thought to be anonymous was actually the work of Lewis Carroll. Those images—mostly of children (above, Beatrice Henley), including his beloved Alice Liddell, the inspiration behind 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'—are all on view together for the first time in New York in "Reflections in a Looking Glass: A Lewis Carroll Centenary Exhibition," accompanied by a selection of Carroll's books, letters, drawings, and manuscripts. At the Equitable Gallery, 787 Seventh Avenue; through April 24.

Photograph courtesy of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

continue to draw on his extensive travels; through 3/27. Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (431-3685).

Steve Mumford/Willard Boepple—Shelf-like wood sculptures and freestanding boxes/Paintings in which geometric patterns are superimposed on cars. Through 3/27. Collins, 83 Grand St. (226-1861).

Jaime Palacios—New paintings that combine images of Christian saints, African divinities, and symbols from Santeria; through 3/27. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2625).

Markus Raetz—Recent sculpture; through 4/24. Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (925-4338).

Robert Rauschenberg—New paintings; through 4/17. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (421-3292).

Yuko Shiraishi—Minimal abstract paintings that refer to nature's secrets and contradictions through the juxtapositions of two or three colors; through 3/24. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (966-6676).

Sergio Vega—A multimedia interpretation of the seventeenth-century book *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo,* which proposed that the Garden of Eden was located in South America; through 3/20. Basilico, 26 Wooster St. (966-1831).

Kay Walkingstick—New charcoal drawings depicting figures in various psychological states; through 3/31. Kelly, 591 Broadway (226-1660).

Stephen Westfall—Recent paintings of grids on monochromatic grounds; through 3/27. Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (941-0012).

Chelsea

Janine Antoni—An installation of new sculptures and photographs inspired by the need to hold and the need to be held; through 4/17. Luhring Augustine, 5531 W. 24th St. (206-9100).

Donald Baechler—New large-scale collage paintings made up of faces retrieved from throwaway doodles, commercial packaging, and third-world signage; through 3/27. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727).

Jeremy Blake—Digitally rendered and animated projections and digital paintings depicting architectural spaces in California that hint at a film noir–ish narrative; through 4/10. Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. (929-0500).

Niels Bonde—Sculpture and photographs that explore the desire to be watched; through 3/30. Rare, 435 W. 14th St. (645-5591).

Zaha Hadid—Recent drawings and models, including works related to her first U.S. commission, the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, Ohio; through 4/3. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (633-6999).

Bethan Huws—Watercolors that refer to the artist's childhood in the Welsh countryside and vitrines containing small boats made from lengths of reeds; through 4/3. Bonakdar Jancou, 521 W. 21st St. (414-4144).

Karen Kilimnik—New paintings and photographs that present likenesses of the artist in the guise of real and imagined characters; through 3/20. 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (255-1121).

Donna Moylan/Elaine Reichek—Recent paintings in which narrative is layered over abstraction; through 3/27/A video and new video stills from a larger body of work, When This You See . . . , which is a compilation of clips from films from the twenties to the nineties that show women sewing; through 3/27. Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. (243-3335).

Jim Shaw—New paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs that document the artist's dreams; through 3/27. Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (206-7100).

Other

Willard Boepple—New geometric wall sculptures constructed from pine; through 4/3. New York Studio School, 8 W. 8th St. (673-6466).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Feigen—49 E. 68th St. (628-0700). "Strange Beauty: A Century of Mannerism, 1520–1620." Mannerist paintings and drawings from Italy and the Netherlands by Caravaggio, Pino, Puligo, Vasari, others; through 4/2.

Wildenstein—19 E. 64th St. (879-0500). "French Master Drawings From the 16th Through the 18th Centuries," with works by Boucher, Fragonard, Greuze, Watteau, others; through 5/1.

57th Street Area

Equitable—787 Seventh Ave. (554-4818), Mon.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 12–5. "Reflections in a Looking Glass: A Lewis Carroll Centenary Exhibition," an overview of photographs, manuscripts, and drawings by the Victorian writer and artist; through 4/24.

Washburn—20 W. 57th St. (397-6780). Abstract works from the forties and fifties by Bolotowsky, Brooks, Kambrowski, Mason, Pollock, Shaw, others; through 3/27.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Artists Space—38 Greene St. (226-3970). "Shy," an exhibition curated by Nan Goldin that includes works by lesser-known artists and close friends who have influenced her work, including Bourcart, Dick, Marten, Nathan, others; through 4/3.

Dorsky—379 W. Broadway (966-6170). "Om," an exhibition of meditative works by Bowen, Christensen, Highstein, Means, Shechet, Westfall, others; through 4/6.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (966-7745). "Paradise 8," a curatorial experiment in which eight curators will merge initially discrete exhibition zones of works by various artists within the gallery space over a period of three months; through 4/3.

Chelsea

Art Resources Transfer, Inc.—210 Eleventh Ave. (691-5956). Glass sculpture and paintings by Judith Linhares and Lindsay Walt; through 3/14; Paintings by Jenny Hankwitz and sculpture by Gail Fitzgerald; through 3/20; *Domestica,* an installation by Michael McMillen; through 3/14.

Kempner—501 W. 23rd St. (206-6872). Prints by female artists, including Bartlett, Dill, Frankenthaler, Murray, Smith, Walker, others; through 4/11.

Other

Rotunda—33 Clinton St., between Cadman Plaza West and Pierrepont St., Brooklyn (718-875-4047), Tues.–Fri. 12–5, Sat. 11–4. "Zone of Risibility," an exhibition of humorous and witty works by Brooklyn artists Awai, Cook, Costigan, Ganjian, Moyer, Mukerjee, Wang, others; through 3/27.

Photography

Ansel Adams—Photographs by the famous landscape photographer; through 5/1. Carter, 560 Broadway (966-1933).

Bernd and Hilla Becher—New photographs of industrial structures by collaborators who have been working together for almost forty years; through 3/27. Sonnabend, 420 W. Broadway (966-6160).

Jed Devine—New and previously unseen palladium prints; through 3/27. Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. (517-3766).

Eve Fowler—Color photographs of young female athletes and male Manhattan hustlers, and still-lifes; through 4/10. Saul, 560 Broadway (431-0747).

Lee Friedlander—Fifty-four new photographs, many of street scenes, by the artist most famous for his images of musicians; through 3/20. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Patricia Heal—Recent, elaborately staged photographs that contrast stylized icons and props from different eras; through 4/24. Tonkonow, 601 W. 26th St. (255-8450).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1777), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "Newman's Gift," a retrospective that spans Arnold Newman's 60-year career, including his intimate portraits of Picasso, Capote, Cartier-Bresson, others; 3/13–6/6.

ICP Midtown—1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (768-4682), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (5–8 admission by voluntary contribution), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "To the Rescue," paintings, sculpture, photography, video, and multimedia works by Abakanowicz, Ewald, Osorio, Winters, and four others that reflect the artists' research in the American Joint Distribution Committee's photographic archives; through 3/16.

Wendell MacRae—Vintage photographs commemorating the gallery's thirtieth anniversary; through 4/10. Witkin, 415 W. Broadway (925-5510).

Mann—210 Eleventh Ave. (570-1223). "Inside/Outside," in conjunction with *Blind Spot* magazine's recent issue, an exhibition of photographs including images by Bartscherer, Brouws, Casebere, Tourlentes, Waters, others; through 3/27.

Marlborough Chelsea—211 W. 19th St. (463-8634). Landscape photographs by over twenty artists, including Becher, Eggleston, Weiss, Gursky, Meyerowitz, Ruff, Sugimoto, others; through 4/3.

Miller—20 W. 57th St. (397-3930). Recent color photographs by Stéphane Couturier; "Visage," an exhibition of sixteen portraits by renowned photographers Evans, Abbott, Steichen, others; through 3/27.

Barbara Morgan—Retrospective of a photographer known for her collaborations with Martha Graham and her experimental photomontages and photograms; through 3/27. Danziger, 851 Madison Ave. (734-5300).

Lucian Perkins—"Runway Madness," photographs of the New York fashion scene by the Pulitzer-prize winning Washington *Post* photographer; through 3/27. Newseum, 580 Madison Ave. (317-7596).

Lisa Pines—Portraits of families by an artist best known for her nudes; through 3/31. Debs, 529 W. 20th St. (647-7080).

August Sander/Frederic Weber—Cropped color photographs of faces and abstract monochromatic color fields/Portraits of Weimar Germany from the artist's "Citizens of the Twentieth Century" series. Through 3/28. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

Gerardo Suter—A survey of works exploring such themes as memory and the persistence of the past, by an Argentinian-born artist who has lived in Mexico since 1970, including black-and-white photographs of landscapes and figures, through 3/21, at the Americas Society, 680 Park Ave. (249-8950), and Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st. St. (223-1059); two large-scale video installations, through 3/20, at the Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. (879-3500).

Annika von Hausswolff—Nine large photographs of domestic interiors; through 4/3. Kaplan, 48 Greene St. (226-6131).

Ellen von Unwerth—Black-and-white and color erotic photographs by the former knife thrower's assistant and contemporary German photographer; through 4/3. Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (966-6223).

Brett Weston—Photographs of the Oceano Dunes taken between 1931 and 1969; through 3/27. D2, 851 Madison Ave. (734-5300).

Charlie White—Large-scale photographs of "monsters" created by a special-effects artist; through 4/10. Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (627-6000).

Thomas Wrede—Photographs of roller-coaster riders; through 4/3. Cristinerose, 529 W. 20th St. (206-0297).

Zabriskie—41 E. 57th St. (752-1223). "Au Revoir Paris," an exhibit of French photographers whose first American exhibitions were held at this gallery; through 4/10.

Museums

Alternative Museum—"The Pursuit of Happiness: Visual Essays on Global Rights." Photography, video, and installations by Berry, Chang, Griffiths, Lyon, Meiselas, Nachtwey, Peress, others; through 4/10. 594 Broadway (966-4444), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

American Craft Museum—"Rörstrand: Swedish Art Nouveau Porcelain From the Schreiber Collection." A rare collection of porcelain produced by Sweden's Rörstrand factory, Europe's second-oldest operating ceramics firm; through 5/23. . . . "Art and Industry: 20th-Century Porcelain From Sèvres." Recent works in porcelain by 40 international artists, architects, and designers created at the Sèvres factory in France; through 5/2. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Epidemic! The World of Infectious Disease." Dioramas, three-dimensional models, videos, films, interactive computer systems, and photographs; through 9/6. . . . "Papua New Guinea: Arts and Spirits, Photographs From the Middle Sepik River, 1953–54." Color and black-and-white photographs of Papua New Guinea's indigenous species, art, architecture, and people, taken by Museum ornithologist E. Thomas Gilliard during his 1953–54 expedition; through 3/28. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society—"Bamboo Masterworks: Japanese Baskets From the Lloyd Cotsen Collection"; through 5/30. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA), Tues.–Sat. 11–6, Sun. 12–5, Thurs. 11–8 (6–8 free admission); $4, $2 seniors and students.

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts—"Life and the Arts in the Baroque Palaces of Rome: Ambiente Barocco." Furniture and decorative works from Roman palaces, on loan from public and private collections; 3/11–6/13. 18 W. 86th St. (501-3000), Tues.–Sun. 11–5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 students and seniors.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Lewis Wickes Hine: The Final Years." 110 photographs of New York, only ten of which have been seen by the public, including images documenting the construction of the Empire State Building, the arrival of immigrants at Ellis Island, and workers in mills and factories; through 4/4. . . . "Domestic Transformations: Working in Brooklyn." Wallpaper, carpets, furniture, and ceramic tiles by Brooklyn-based artists Ann Agee, Jean Blackburn, Ron Baron, and Andy Yoder; through 3/14. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–6 (museum open until 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"Graphic Design in the Mechanical Age: Selections From the Merrill C. Berman Collection." More than 200 works by such pioneers of the avant-garde as Lester Beall, A. M. Cassandre, Gustav Klutsis, Alexandr Rodchenko, and Jan Tschichold, including posters, books, one-of-a-kind prototypes, collages, and other ephemera; through 5/23. . . . "Unlimited by Design." An exhibition focusing on products, services, and environments designed to meet the needs of people throughout their lives; through 3/21. 2 E. 91st St. (849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (free admission 5–9); $5, $3 seniors and students.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Stan Douglas and Douglas Gordon: *Double Vision*." New site-specific installations by the Canadian artist Stan Douglas and the Scottish artist Douglas Gordon; through 6/13. . . . "Andy Warhol: *Shadows*." A work made in 1978 composed of more than 100 silkscreened and hand-painted panels; through 6/13. . . . "Thomas Schütte: *Scenewright*." Early installations, small-scale modeled figures, proposals for monuments, watercolors, and photographs by the German artist; through 6/13. . . . "Joseph Beuys: Drawings After the Codices Madrid of Leonardo da Vinci, and Sculpture." Works from Dia's permanent collection, including 96 drawings made in response to two sketchbooks by Leonardo da Vinci, and sculptures; through 6/13. . . . "Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square 3*." The second part of a site-specific installation by the California artist; through 6/13. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5566), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"Raymond Pettibon." More than 500 drawings from the late seventies to the present, and a selection of artist's books, fanzines, and record covers by the Los Angeles–based artist; through 4/10. 35 Wooster St. (219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection—"French and English Drawings of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries From the National Gallery of Canada." Sixty-seven works by French and English artists, among them Bonnard, Burne-Jones, Constable, Courbet, Hogarth, and Ingres; through 4/25. . . . "Drouais' Portrait of Madame de Pompadour From the National Gallery, London." François-Hubert Drouais's celebrated full-length portrait of Madame de Pompadour; through 4/25. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Projected Selves: Cahun, Deren, Sherman and Photographic Transformation." Self-portraiture as self-invention in the works of the Surrealist Claude Cahun, filmmaker Maya Deren, and artist Cindy Sherman; through 5/8. New York University, 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Tues., Thurs.–Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5; donation suggested.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"Picasso and the War Years: 1937–1945." An exhibition of paintings, drawings, sculpture, and prints that explores Picasso's artistic response to the events leading from the Spanish Civil War through the Nazi occupation of France and the eventual liberation of France by Allied troops; through 5/9. . . . "Jim Dine: Walking Memory, 1959–1969." The first survey of the artist's early paintings and constructions; through 5/16. . . . "Photography: An Expanded View—Recent Acquisitions." Works from the museum's permanent collection by modern masters and contemporary photographers Barth, Casebere, Coolidge, Demand, Eliasson, Jacobson, and others; through 5/16.1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 seniors and students.

Jewish Museum—"Bar Mitzvah: A Collaboration by David Mamet and Donald Sultan." Drawings and text from the new book, *Bar Mitzvah—Story by David Mamet, Drawings by Donald Sultan* (Bulfinch); through 6/6. . . . "Ikat: Splendid Silks of Central Asia From the Guido Goldman Collection." Rare silk wall hangings, mounted panels, and robes made by master craftsmen in the kingdoms of Bukhara and Samarkand; through 5/16. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

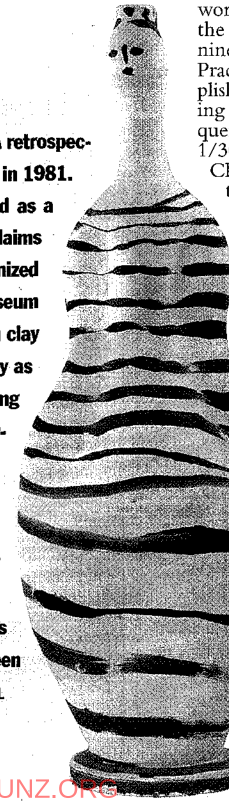
Metropolitan Museum of Art—"The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi." Approximately 70 masterpieces of medieval and Renaissance panel painting, goldsmiths' works, textiles, and manuscript illuminations from Assisi, as well as works from European and American collections; 3/16–6/27. . . . "Mirror of the Medieval World." Jewelry, manuscripts, sculptures and other works acquired by the museum since 1977; through 7/15. . . . "American Folk Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Paintings, watercolors, drawings, and portrait miniatures by Rufus Hathaway, Edward Hicks, Joshua Johnson, Ammi Phillips, and others working within naive and provincial traditions in the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; through 9/5. . . . "The Practice of Japanese Art: An August and Accomplished Heritage." Buddhist and decorative painting and calligraphy, along with ceramics, lacquers, metalwork, and woodblock prints; through 1/30/2000. . . . "Picasso: Painter and Sculptor in Clay." A survey of the artist's ceramic sculptures; through 6/6. . . . "Late-16th Century to Early-19th Century Indian Drawings"; through 7/5. . . . "Masterpieces From the Gilman Paper Company Collection." Approximately 45 important nineteenth-century British, American, and French photographs; through 5/23. . . . "Dosso Dossi, Court Painter in Renaissance Ferrara." Paintings by the sixteenth-century Italian artist, who worked in Ferrara; through 3/28. . . . "Anselm Kiefer: Works on Paper, 1969–1993." A selection of works on paper that offer an overview of the ideas and themes of the first two decades of the German painter's career; through 3/21. . . . "Cubism and Fashion." Cubism-influenced clothing by Madeleine Vionnet, Callot Soeurs, and Gabrielle Chanel, as well as examples of contemporary fashion; through 3/14. . . . "Eighteenth-Century French Drawings in New York Collections." Works on loan from private collections and public institutions in New York City; through 4/25. . . . "Clay Into Art: Selections From the Collection of Contemporary

Retrospective

Fired Works

First, there were Picasso's late "Avignon" paintings, shunned by the 1980 MOMA retrospective, then given a new lease on life in a scholarly exhibition at the Pace Gallery in 1981. This time around, it's the artist's involvement with ceramics, often dismissed as a purely commercial undertaking, that is getting a fresh spin. But instead of making claims for Picasso as a potter, which he wasn't, "Picasso: Painter and Sculptor in Clay," organized by the Royal Academy of Arts, London, and currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum (1000 Fifth Avenue, at 82nd Street; through June 6), treats Picasso's experiments in clay as an extension of his painting and sculpture. Picasso had modeled with clay as early as 1905, but he didn't take up ceramics in a serious way until 1947, when he was staying in Vallauris, in the south of France. An introduction to the owners of Madoura, a nearby pottery, piqued the 66-year-old artist's curiosity; soon he was showing up regularly with drawings for clay objects under his arm. He couldn't throw a pot, recalled his then-companion, Françoise Gilot, in her memoir *Life With Picasso*, but used his hands and tools to mold still-damp forms, to incise, and to paint and glaze. "He worked along with his material as far as its possibilities allowed him, and then invented his own means from that point on," observed Gilot. Which is why, perhaps, the plates, figures (right, *Woman*, 1949), and other ceramic objects Picasso produced over the next fifteen years are among his most unabashedly exuberant works.

EDITH NEWHALL



Ceramics"; through 5/30. . . . "The Academy of the Sword: Illustrated Fencing Books, 1500–1800." More than 25 rare books accompanied by swords, daggers, shields, and gauntlets from the museum's collection; through 8/30. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum for African Art—"Landscapes of the Soul: Woman of the African Diaspora—Photographs by Chester Higgins, Jr." Images of African and African-American women taken over the past 30 years; through 3/28. . . . "A Sense of Wonder: African Art From the Faletti Family Collection." A selection of objects from Western, Central, and Eastern Africa dating from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century; through 3/28. 593 Broadway (966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $2.50 seniors, students, and children.

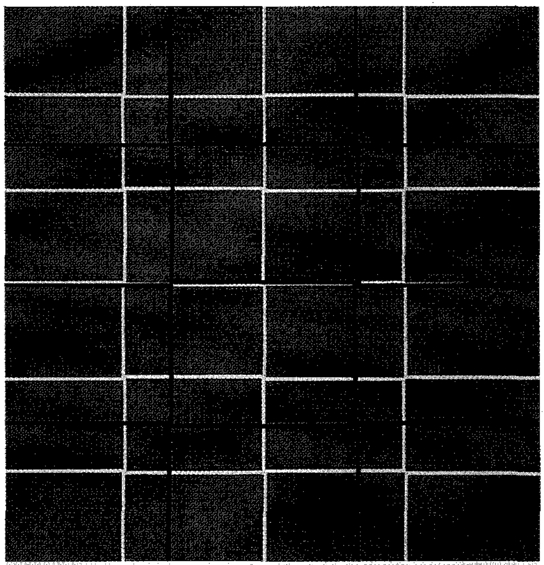
Museum of American Folk Art—"Nellie Mae Rowe: Ninety-Nine-and-a-Half Won't Do." The first major retrospective of paintings by the self-taught African-American artist; through 5/2. Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Jewish Heritage—""France Divided: Impassioned Responses to the Dreyfus Scandal." A selection of posters and lithographs illustrating France's reactions to the wrongful conviction and imprisonment of Captain Alfred Dreyfus in 1894; through 6/13. 18 First Place, Battery Park City (968-1800), Sun.–Wed. 9–5, Thurs. 9–8, Fri. 9–2, eve of Jewish holidays 9–2, closed Sat. and Jewish holidays; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect." Works that address the concept and function of the museum by 60 artists, among them Barbara Bloom, Christian Boltanski, Marcel Broodthaer, Joseph Cornell, Marcel Duchamp, Komar and Melamid, Claes Oldenburg, and Hiroshi Sugimoto; 3/14–6/1. . . . "Pop Impressions Europe/USA: Prints and Multiples From the Museum of Modern Art." Approximately 100 works highlighting printmaking within the Pop aesthetic; through 5/18. . . . "Projects 67—Elaine Reichek: When This You See." Embroidered works that take the format of traditional samplers, but whose aphorisms are culled from art history, literature, science, mythology, and popular culture; through 3/30. . . . "Julia Margaret Cameron's Women." Portraits of women by the nineteenth-century British photographer; through 5/4. . . . "Site Gags: Humor, Satire, and Grotesque in Modern and Contemporary Drawings." Works on paper from the museum's collection, including satirical sketches, grotesques, straight comic illustrations, and visual puns; through 5/4. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Washington's New York." Paintings, costumes, maps, furniture, documents, and relics relating to George Washington's experiences in New York City as a military commander and political leader; through 7/4. . . . "The Little Apple: Souvenir Buildings From the Collection of Ace Architects." A selection of miniature models of New York buildings created over the past 100 years; through 3/28. . . . "New York Horizontal: Cirkut Camera Views by William Hassler." Thirty rare panoramic views of WWI-era New York; through 5/2. . . . "New York Vertical by Horst Hamman." Photographs that emphasize the verticality of New York's skyscrapers; through 4/18. . . . "New York on the Rise: Architectural Renderings by Hughson Hawley"; through 4/4. . . . "Landscapes of Hope: Rebuilding New York City's Neighborhoods." Photographs by Larry Racioppo documenting the rebuilding of various New York City neighborhoods; through 6/27. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; suggested contribution $5, $3 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"China Chic: East Meets West." An exhibition tracing the evolution of Chinese dress and its influence on modern western fashion; through 4/24. . . . "Shoes: A Lexicon of Style." More than 100 pairs of women's shoes, among them twenties pumps by André Perugia, fifties stilettos by Roger Vivier, and seventies platform sandals by Charles Jourdan; through 4/17. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.



Talent **It's a tried-and-true device, from painting to plaids—a precise grid enhanced by a monochromatic field. But the combination manages to look utterly fresh in Stephen Westfall's new paintings, whose unapologetically luscious background colors and overlays of slightly off-kilter grids create simultaneous complex interactions between colors, widths, foreground and background, and symmetry and asymmetry. At Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway; through March 27.**

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Fever: The Art of David Wojnarowicz." The first retrospective of the work of the East Village artist who died of AIDS in 1992; through 6/20. . . . "Anaida Hernandez: Juegos Ilegales/Illegal Games." Large-scale casinolike games created with interactive installations, paintings, and objects; through 4/11. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs., Fri., and Sat. 12–8, (free Thurs. 6–8); $5, $3 students, artists, and seniors, free for youths 18 and under.

New York Public Library—"Order and Disorder: Architectural Transitions in Prints and Photographs." Prints depicting the life cycles of built structures, drawn from the library's Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints, and Photographs; through 4/3. . . . *"In thy map securely saile"*: Maps, Atlases, Charts, and Globes From the Lawrence H. Slaughter Collection, Map Division." Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century works that were donated to the library's Map Division in 1997 by the estate of Lawrence H. Slaughter; through 3/20. . . . Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"The Celebrated Hatter." An exhibition of hats, advertisements, newspaper articles, and other objects and ephemera relating to the life of John N. Genin, the nineteenth-century New Yorker whose lower-Broadway store, Genin's Hat Emporium, made him a household name; through 6/13. . . . "New York's Finest: A History of the New York City Police Department." Photographs, newspapers, weapons, uniforms, and crime-detection equipment; through 3/21. . . . "Secrets of a Beautiful Face: Beauty Product Advertisements From the Collection of the New-York Historical Society"; through 4/11. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Ronald Bladen: Selected Works." A survey of the minimalist's large-scale sculpture, models, and drawings; through 4/3. . . . "1999: P.S. 1 Studio Program Exhibition"; through 4/3. . . . "Primarily Structural: A Selection of Minimalist and Post-Minimalist Works on Paper." Works by Carl Andre, Jene Highstein, Patrick Ireland, Jackie Winsor, and others; through 4/3. . . . "Criss Cross: Some Young New Yorkers III"; through 4/3. . . . "The Game Room: A Tribute to Gino De Dominicis." A painting and several conceptual works together with a gambling table for the use of museum visitors; through 4/3. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084) Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"The Wormsley Library: A Personal Selection by Sir Paul Getty, K.B.E." Illuminated manuscripts, fine printed books, historic bookbindings, and other works from the Wormsley Library in England; through 5/2. . . . "Master Drawings Recently Acquired"; through 5/6. . . . "Poe: The Ardent Imagination." A selection of letters, manuscripts, and rare printed editions; through 5/9. . . . "Detectives, Private Eyes, and Spies." Early editions of works by Ambler, Childers, Poe, and others; through 5/5. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $7; $5 students and seniors.

Queens Museum of Art—"Life Cycles: The Charles E. Burchfield Collection." A selection of the artist's watercolors, works on paper, lithographs, and paintings from the Burchfield-Penney Center in Buffalo; through 3/21. . . . "Before the Lens: Images of the Imagemakers From the Charles Schwartz Collection." Photographs of Louis-Jacques Mandé Daguerre, Nadar, William Henry Fox Talbot, and other well-known photographers taken by famous and anonymous photographers; through 3/21. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Ray Johnson: Correspondences." Selections from five decades of work by the collagist and mail artist (1927–95); through 3/21. . . . "Gary Hill: Circular Breathing." Five large-scale black-and-white video projections; through 3/21. . . . "Pale Guide to Transparent Things." A related group of photographic works by Seton Smith; through 4/4. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $9, $7 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"The Long Twilight: An Installation by Lynne Yamamoto." An installation that evokes aspects of the life of a young Japanese woman who disappeared mysteriously in the thirties by presenting a collection of her personal belongings; through 4/23. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (427-2730). 3/10 at 10: "Fine Furniture, Decorations, and Paintings." On view from 3/6.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 3/10 at 2: "Art Deco." On view from 3/7. 3/11 and 3/12 at 10:15 and 2: "American Paintings." On view from 3/6. 3/16 at 10:15 and 2: "Judaica." On view from 3/11.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 3/11: "Early Printed Books." On view from 3/7.

Photograph courtesy of Lennon, Weinberg, Inc.

restaurants

Room Redo...Amaranth...Winner Dinner

Tasting
Everything's at Steak

When all else fails—or at least flags—try steak. That's what the continuing epidemic of new steakhouses (Chateaubriand, Bellagio, Steak au Poivre), not to mention the enduring success of all the old ones (Luger's, Gallagher's), seems to be telling us. Last decade's dalliance with fish-enhanced virtual vegetarianism has given way to wholehearted red-meat recidivism, and the reason, according to Michael Jordan's steakhouse chef David Walzog, is simple: "People have learned that everything is fine in moderation." That's something you'd never know from the size of the corn-fed, dry-aged Nebraskan specimens he's started serving at Tapika, Jordan's sister restaurant, where he's shrunk the southwestern part of the menu to accommodate monster bone-in cuts (chili-rubbed upon request) that feed up to four people as well as steakhouse sides like creamed spinach and hash browns. Steak is a logical extension—and, at $22 to $29 a person, a lucrative one—for the frontier-themed Tapika, and with steak comes an entire product line: Hot sauce and habanero-tinged "cowboy" steak sauce are part of a new collection of homegrown condiments that go on sale this week at the restaurant. (950 Eighth Avenue, at 56th Street; 397-3737.)

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

American Park—Sophisticated seafood preparations and wonderful water views merit a special trip to the southern tip of Manhattan. In warm weather, outdoor seating is ideal for cocktails and light bites from the raw bar, but even in winter, walls of glass windows remind us that this is a coastal town, after all. Catering available. *Opposite 175 State St., Battery Park (809-5508). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Can—This elegant SoHo canteen for the hip and the stylish excels in Asian seafood concoctions like hot-pot salmon, South Sea prawns, and seafood paradise, a mélange of lobster, clams, and scallops with a mild black-bean sauce. *482 W. Broadway (533-6333). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Cub Room—Fighting back from the scorching bar scene his restaurant became last summer, chef-owner Henry Meer (from Lutèce)—doing penance for the butter and cream of the past—is dishing up contemporary American fare to an impossibly diverse crowd. Yes, that was Ethan Hawke. *131 Sullivan St., at Prince St. (677-4100). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Diva—Another hip spot at the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candelabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. *341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. *124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty. But then, the Hudson River figures prominently so many ways here. The emphasis is on Hudson River Valley cuisine, with specialties like venison prosciutto, squash soup, roast pheasant, and Catskill Mountains trout. *4 World Financial Ctr. (786-1500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

The Independent—From the minute it opened, this tavernesque TriBeCa duplex has been a favorite of the fashionable neighborhood. The creative American bistro fare includes an acclaimed roasted garlic-lemon chicken with spinach and mashed potatoes, barbecued pork ribs, and lobster cakes served with a sweet corn salad. *179 W. Broadway (219-2010). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Karahi—Now, SoHo denizens and window-shoppers have yet another hospitable neighborhood alternative to Little India to satisfy cravings for lamb vindaloo and tikka masala. The all-you-can-eat lunch buffet is a great deal at $6.95. *508 Broome St. (965-1515). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

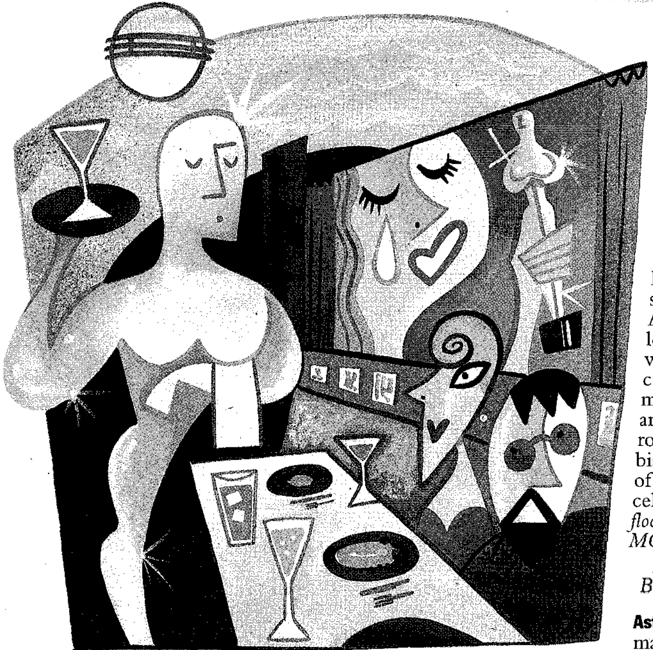
Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Pierino—An Italian dining room full of businesspeople and city politicians for lunch and dinner for the bankers on their way uptown offering meta-traditional dishes like lobster and steak. Yes, that

Photographs by Amy Freeth.



Happening

And the Dinner Is . . .

It's two weeks to Oscars, and your invites to the big studio bashes must be stuck somewhere in insufficient-postage limbo. You could order out for pizza as usual or, in keeping with the lavish spirit of the evening, snag a table at the Screening Room, where all of Tinseltown's nail-biting and spotlight-hogging will be broadcast over monitors installed throughout the cozy dining room and on the big screen in the theater next door. Linger all night, from preshow to Best Picture, and dine on Mark Spangenthal's $90 four-course menu, with choices like steamed lobster with shellfish fricassee, and smoked salmon with johnny cakes. Those on an indie budget can satisfy themselves with a cocktail, popcorn, soda, and a seat in the theater for $25. Space is limited, so reserve. (54 Varick Street; 334-2100.)

was Peter Vallone. *107 Reade St. (513-0610). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a $17.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Wall Street Kitchen & Bar—As downtown grows more and more residential, its halls of finance, like this former bank building, are being converted into service establishments. This sister of SoHo Kitchen & Bar offers a similarly extensive selection of beers and wines by the glass, plus such eclectic American fare as beer-braised short ribs with egg noodles, and pizza topped with shrimp, smoked bacon, and roasted tomatoes. *70 Broad St. (797-7070). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef Michael Lomonaco, formerly of the '21' Club, has landed at this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His new menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including skillet-roasted bluepoint oysters with sweet shallot-caviar cream; open raviolo of forest mushrooms, pumpkin, and sage; and Maine lobster with truffles, root vegetables, and buttermilk biscuits. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's superlative wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. Late-night dining too. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale decor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Knickerbocker Bar and Grill—A subdued steakhouse with vintage items on the walls—Hirschfelds, copies of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and nineteenth-century curios. A sophisticated combination of gastronomics and history. *33 University Pl., at E. 9th St. (228-8490). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Bar Cichetti—Modeled after a typical bar in Venice, where patrons gather for a glass of wine—choose here among 50—and small snacks called *cichetti* (think Italian tapas). Sample among appetizer-size portions of rice balls, fried meatballs, frittatas, and crostini, or, should these snacks merely whet the appetite, have a full meal of pasta, chicken, fish, or beef. Perfect for pre- or post–Film Forum noshing. *220 W. Houston St. (229-0314). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Boxers—A lively neighborhood American bistro on a heavily trafficked corner of Sheridan Square. The giddy bar scene brings them in, and the high-spirited frenzy and good food keep them coming back. (A newer uptown branch offers a similar menu of American classics like chicken potpie and grilled steaks and burgers, and is decorated with a similar canine motif.) *190 W. 4th St. (633-2275). Also, 1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Le Zoo—A West Village hot spot, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassoulet. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

One if by Land, Two if by Sea—Elegant Village restaurant situated within an eighteenth-century carriage house previously owned by Aaron Burr. Four fireplaces and nightly piano music enhance a fine menu of American specialties like beef Wellington. *17 Barrow St. (228-0822). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We *love* the white-peach sangría. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Candela—A soaring space just off Union Square with medieval-theme décor and a contemporary American menu. Seared yellowfin tuna, braised lamb shank, and the random Asian influence as epitomized by the spicy chicken wontons indicate the chef's range. Light bites and a range of wines can be had at the already-buzzing bar. *116 E. 16th St. (254-1600). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and

Illustration by Robert DeMichiell

cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Medusa—A lot of thought went into the décor at this new restaurant: The floors and bar are red travertine marble, and decorative ironwork details the sconces and door frames. The au courant Mediterranean menu includes such specialties as poppy-seed-encrusted tuna with lime sauce and rack of lamb with Chianti and grilled golden apples. *239 Park Avenue South, nr. 19th St. (477-1500). (M) AE, MC, V.*

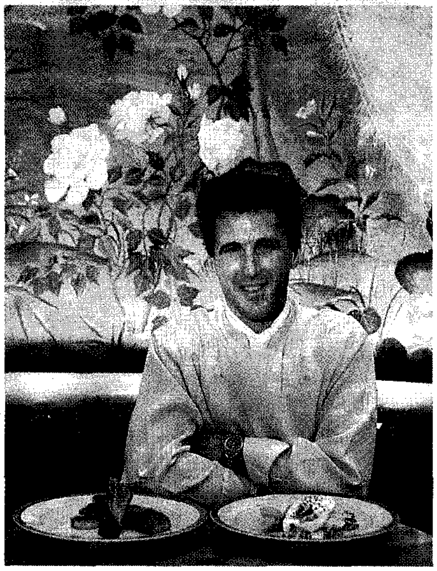
Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Object of Desire

Out Like a Lamb

Laurent Gras, the innovative and masterful chef at Peacock Alley (the easiest-to-get three-star reservation in town), has a new "epicure" menu to welcome early spring. My picks are the steamed wild halibut with fresh verbena, chives, and littleneck clams; and the pre-paschal (as well as pre-Pesach) boneless rack of lamb dusted with anise and served with a ragout of figs, romaine lettuce, hazelnuts, and lemon juice. (301 Park Avenue, at 50th Street; 872-4895.) **PETER KAMINSKY**



Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Piccolino—A country-style Italian restaurant offering homemade pastas and thin-crust pizzas in a peach stucco duplex. (The building is a century old.) Worth trying are the risotto pescatore, shrimp-pesto pizza, and veal quattroformaggio. *8 E. 36th St. (683-6444). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Verbena—Diane Forley's seasonal American cuisine is at once delicate and deliciously satisfying; the room, similarly, pulls off the neat trick of feeling luxurious and minimalist at the same time. The menu is whimsically divided into two categories—fruits and vegetables, and fish, birds, and meats—with such appealing entries as butternut squash ravioli with roasted orange sauce, and rack of lamb with Yorkshire pudding. In summer, demand a garden table. *54 Irving Pl. (260-5454). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Water Club—This romantic spot overlooking the East River is a favorite for formal affairs, but even your average demanding New York diner would be happy with the American menu and the airy, yacht club–like setting. As to be expected in this nautical environment, there's a heavy emphasis on seafood like lobster and soft-shell crabs, and a massive spread for Sunday brunch. Jackets suggested in the main dining room. *F.D.R. Drive via 23rd St. (683-3333). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Caffe Bondi Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimparata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner, which could be a hearty serving of filet mignon or Chilean sea bass, topped off with cheesecake, our city's major contribution to the confectionery world. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten, during which time you'll dine and dance to the music of a live band. Jacket required. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Bice—It's always buzzing at this midtown Italian hot spot, where the fashionable crowd takes a hiatus from air-kissing to partake of dishes like lobster salad with baby vegetables, porcini risotto, and veal chop Milanese. *7 E. 54th St. (688-1999). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Istana—Situated in the lobby of the New York Palace hotel, this Mediterranean newcomer is rightfully proud of its olive bar, the only one, chances are, of its kind. Tapas are ideal cocktail accompaniments; heartier appetites are readily satisfied by paella-style roasted fish, pumpkin ravioli with walnuts, or baby chicken with Tunisian spices. *455 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (303-6032). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Jimmy Sung's—This elegant midtown restaurant serves classic Hunan cuisine and a sampling of dishes from other regions. Private dining rooms are perfect for special occasions, business meetings or mini-banquets. *219 E. 44th St. (682-5678). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Mediterranée—A cozy midtown bistro famous for its simple, well-priced peasant food. Try house specials like cold poached salmon, chilled stuffed baby lobster, and baby lamb chops. *947 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (755-4155). (M) AE, DC.*

Montebello—The staff at this cozy neighborhood restaurant offers a gracious welcome, while the kitchen provides upscale Northern Italian fare, especially affordable in the four-course pretheater menu. Specialties include angel's-hair pasta with fresh tomato and basil, and shrimp sautéed with cognac, broccoli, and red peppers. Private party room available. *120 E. 56th St. (753-1447). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

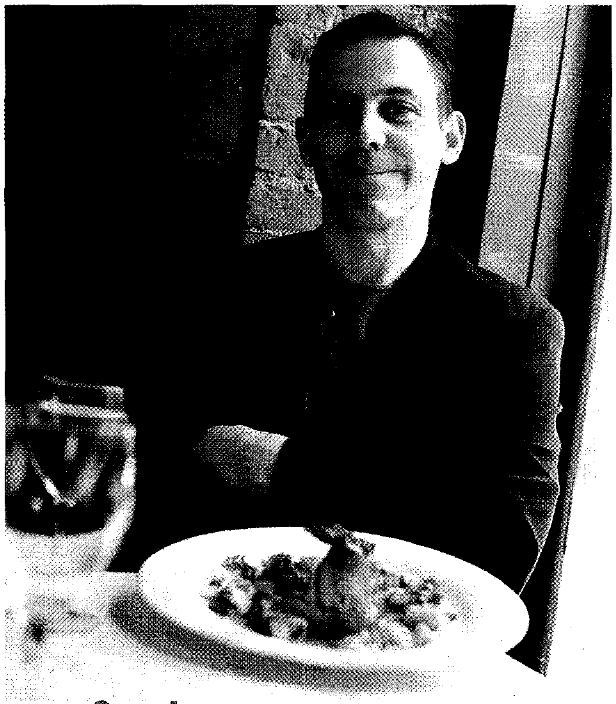
Moscow Restaurant & Cabaret—This Russian theme restaurant melds art, food, and entertainment in a three-story celebration of the homeland. Downstairs, folk singers perform in the rustic Cabaret, decorated with the owner's enormous horseshoe collection. Upstairs, massive sculptures and paintings dominate the Gallery Bar and the Russian Room, where diners can partake of house specialties like Siberian pelmeni, chicken Kiev, and blini with Beluga caviar. *137 E. 55th St. (813-1313). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

The Park Restaurant—The plush surroundings in this hotel-lobby restaurant are much fussier, but no more elegant, than the modern American menu concocted by ex–Aja chef Gary Robins. Piano music performed nightly, and cigar smokers have their own private lounge in which to indulge. *109 E. 56th St. (750-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Pig 'n' Whistle on 3rd—There's plenty of convivial Irish-pub-style cheer in this East Side spinoff of a popular midtown haunt. The basic American menu offers staples like shepherd's pie, blackened rib eye, chicken potpie, barbecued ribs, and onion loaf. *922 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (688-4646). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, cherubs, jazz onstage, and New American cuisine. Executive chef Neal Myers has a flair with meats and creatively prepared seafood, like pepper-crusted tuna with black bean-and-mango sauce, and crab cakes accompanied by cole slaw rolls. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Turtle Bay Grill & Lounge—The kind of place where you kick back, light a stogie, and watch the game. Should hunger develop, there's sesame-seared tuna, Dijon-grilled salmon, shrimp pizza, and the like. *987 Second Ave., nr. 52nd St. (223-4224). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*



Opening

There Goes the Neighborhood

With the competition heating up, and heavy hitters like Ruby Foo's and Spazzia vying for the Upper West Side's collective appetite, the owner of the Evelyn, an unassuming neighborhood hangout, has decided to get serious about his food by hiring chef John Tesar (above), formerly of 13 Barrow. His ambitious menu at the renamed, newly face-lifted Dining Room on Columbus offers globally accented fare like salmon tartare with lemongrass and ginger, lemon-pepper pappardelle with crispy duck confit, and, for brunch, steak and huevos rancheros with an avocado tortilla. (380 Columbus Avenue, at 78th Street; 724-2363.)

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—After extensive renovations, the elegant American restaurant in this posh midtown hotel reopens with a new look and a new, sophisticated menu. A few of the more notable entrées include a grilled turbot "chop" with cèpe jus, organic chicken en cocotte with morels and fava beans, and coriander-and-black-pepper-crusted rack of lamb from Jameson Farms. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (903-3918). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Barbetta—This elegant theater-district landmark is still owned, incredibly, by its founding family. The elaborate interior provides a peaceful background for regional specialties like fonduta, rabbit alla Piedmontese, and a variety of wild-game dishes. The pretheater prix fixe menu runs $43, and the garden is a summertime oasis. *321 W. 46th St. (246-9171). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking with dinner after 5 P.M. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Broadway Joe's Steakhouse—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Commonwealth Grill & Brewery—This Boston brewery import in Rockefeller Center attracts a riotous after-work crowd for its craft beers. The lunch and dinner menus feature American fare like grilled swordfish over lemon pasta, braised lamb shank, duck breast, and tuna, not to mention the obligatory burger. *35 W. 48th St. (977-2269). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Rosina—A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other casual Italian fare, like baked polenta marinara and veal scallopine. Try the $19.98 prix fixe dinner or the $12.95 lunch. *342 W. 46th St. (977-7373). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Mars 2112—Theme restaurants go intergalactic at this big-budget newcomer, which transports diners to the red planet via space shuttle. The food—applewood-smoked pork chops, lobster-mango sushi, smoked-duck quesadillas—will be, for the most part, familiar to earthlings. *1633 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2112). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes fritto misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Palio—Stylish midtown duplex restaurant, with a famous muraled bar and elegant preparations of Italian dishes like spinach-and-ricotta gnocchi with a vegetable ragout, and artichoke-and-marjoram ravioli in fresh tomato sauce. *151 W. 51st St. (245-4850). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak—and, for iconoclasts, the inevitable chops, chicken, and lobster—served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. Serious wines, too. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tennessee Mountain Restaurant & Saloon—The midtown offshoot of a SoHo rib joint, this much larger duplex restaurant serves an extensive southern barbecue menu, which is also available for on-and-off-premises catering. Cigar smokers even have their own designated space in which to unmolestedly exhale. The barbecued and hickory-smoked ribs have already made a major impression on Manhattan meat-lovers. *121 W. 45th St. (869-4545). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Trattoria Dopo Teatro—Chef Andrea Pace is famous for his open ravioli of lobster and lamb, which appear on his Northern Italian menu alongside dishes like sautéed venison chops with spinach gnocchi, risotto with baby shrimps, and artichoke hearts stuffed with sun-dried tomatoes and black-olive purée. The dining room is decorated with stills from the Italian cinema, and it leads into an enclosed "secret garden," a warren of private rooms, each designated for a different leisurely activity (wine room, grappa room, cigar lounge). *125 W. 44th St. (869-2849). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Victor's Cafe 52—A venerable neighborhood haunt with tropical flair. Try the Cuban sandwich or the roast suckling pork. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Dawat—You can't miss with tandoori—cooked before your eyes in the big ovens in the back—or with any of the more unusual regional specials. Actress and cookbook author Madhur Jaffrey supervises the very popular and wide-ranging menu. *210 E. 58th St. (355-7555). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and elegant, this Art Deco dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen, turning out dishes like pyramid of tuna tartar and grilled tuna, and roasted lobster with vanilla bean and lemon pasta. And the artwork on the walls is by some very high-profile, and surprising, nonprofessionals. Dinner only; jacket required. *155 W. 58th St. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who

Photograph by Safia Fatimi.

may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

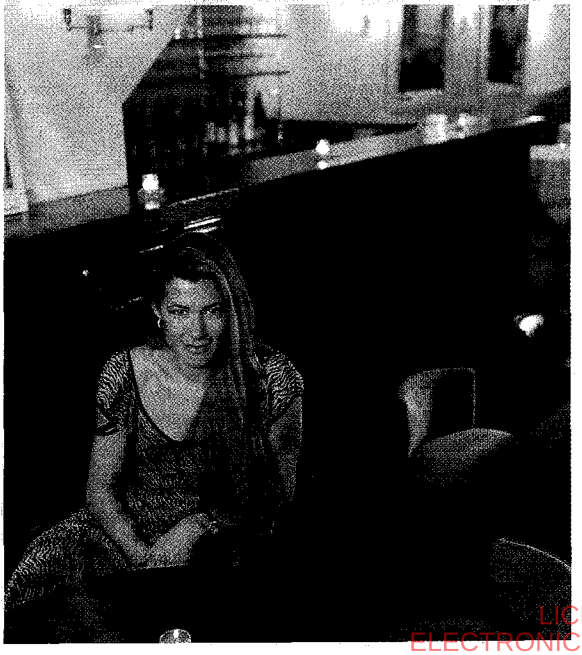
Above 60th Street, East Side

Boxers—This uptown outpost of the Greenwich Village Boxers has a similar menu of American staples like chicken potpie, burgers, and steaks. This spot, in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge, enjoys the distinction of being one of the birthplaces of the Upper East Side swinging singles scene. In fact, the Tom Cruise vehicle *Cocktail* was filmed on the premises. *1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Campagnola—This comfortable Italian spot has been a neighborhood favorite for over a dozen years, thanks in part to host Salvatore's warm welcome. Of course, the flavorful country-style food—Italian bouillabaisse with lobster, double-cut veal chops with wild mushrooms, antipasto—is equally endearing. *1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (861-1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Opening
Med Heads

Paola Pedrignani (below), onetime manager at mad.61 and Cipriani Downtown, and François Marchand, partner at Le Colonial and the late Le Relais, have spent their careers cultivating the ideal see-and-be-seen clientele for Amaranth, their new Mediterranean restaurant in the old Arcadia space. The appetizer-heavy menu—available daily from noon to midnight—offers sampler plates of seafood carpaccio, hummus, and baba ghannouj, crostini and bruschetta, plus simple, unfussy entrées like grilled fish and handmade pastas, in a burgundy-and-saffron-splashed room Pedrignani describes as "very young, very fresh, with the feel of the sun on your skin." And, thanks to the mixological skills she glommed from the Ciprianis, the ripe-peach flavor of Bellinis on your tongue. (21 East 62nd Street; 980-6700.)



Club Macanudo—This plush, elegant shrine to cigar-smoking also offers, besides an astonishing selection of smokes, a sophisticated variety of edibles. The American menu, listing such offbeat items as warm lobster enchiladas and pork loin with coffee-barbecue sauce, takes inspiration from Latin and Caribbean cuisines. Jackets required. *26 E. 63rd St. (752-8200). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

540 Park @ The Regency Hotel—Named for its address, this American grill at the Regency Hotel has a clubby, comfortable atmosphere. The regional, eclectic menu ranges from seared-tuna spring roll and chicken-fried lobster to barbecued duck and black-bean quesadilla. If the term "power breakfast" didn't originate here, it should have. *540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4050). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

JoJo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. Lunch upstairs, overlooking the street, is especially lovely. *160 E. 64th St. (223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park View at the Boathouse—This Central Park landmark has been renovated and updated with an Asian-influenced menu from chef John Villa. Technical improvements have made it possible to keep the restaurant on the lake open all year round, though those who miss visiting it during the summer months do so at their own peril. Choose among new menu items like Gulf shrimp in rice paper roll, and Indian-spiced salmon tartare with mango and cucumber. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Regional Thai Sa-Woy—The well-spiced, artfully presented food at this two-story Thai restaurant costs a bit more than it would at your run-of-the-mill pad thai parlor, but the peaceful ambience and elegant, antique-strewn décor may very well put you in the mood to splurge. *1479 First Ave., at 77th St. (744-6374). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sesumi—The neighborhood relies on this comfortable, brick-walled sushi parlor to satisfy all raw-fish cravings. Try one of the combo boxes. *1649 Second Ave., nr. 85th St. (879-1024). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Merlot Bar & Grill—This wine-besotted restaurant near Lincoln Center offers a French-American menu that complements offerings from the 600-bottle cellar and features two-week-long vintner's dinners. Signature dishes include wild-mushroom strudel, jumbo lump crab cakes, and osso buco of monkfish. Also open for lunch and late-night dining. *48 W. 63rd St. (363-7568). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Pappardella Ristorante Toscano—A casual, inexpensive spot for Italian pasta and seafood. *316 Columbus Ave., at 75th St. (595-7996). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's

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Wolff *continued from page 25*

evitably, the greater media pack has covered the story of Sidney Blumenthal and Christopher Hitchens and now Ed Epstein with a certain satisfaction. Let them eat each other.

Even the invited seem happy to take pot shots (because you have to be pretty far up the social food chain to go to an Epstein or Hitchens party and not end up feeling worse about yourself). Now, while both Epstein and Hitchens do have friends and defenders who are grateful that both men have the energy to devote to giving parties, there is hardly anyone among those people who wouldn't say that both Epstein and Hitchens have something wrong with them. They have a "domesticity problem," as one guest puts it. In other words, their personal shortcoming is probably less, as Navasky maintains, about making private conversations public than it is about mistaking the public sphere—that is, this socializing and networking and gossiping and media-business blah-blahing—for their private lives.

Being a host is certainly a thankless job.

ARE WRITERS' PARTIES DISTINGUISHED FROM other professional gatherings by anything more than the fact that they get written about? Perhaps not, but that self-consciousness probably defines a large difference. The need to tell (how can you not say what you know? You'd burst if you didn't) undoubtedly changes the nature of the gathering itself—and the nature of the relationships among at least a certain rarefied circle of media folk. Simply: People who hover around fame all the time become interested in getting some. We (include here who you will) are not only part of the media but among the most desperate for its attention, too.

Podhoretz's personal social history places politics—"These were life and death issues," he says—at the center of personal motivations (his own most of all), but every time you read between the lines, every time you step back from the tangled passions of who said what to whom in Podhoretz's Family as well as the Epstein-Hitchens crowd, you get a good view of some smart career moves.

Indeed, last week Hitchens addressed the staff of *The Nation*, where there was great relief that he did not resign ("He just expressed his disappointment in us all," said one writer at the meeting), and turned up on *Larry King* as a Monica commentator. "He's in a whole different league now," said a longtime contributor to *The Nation*, speculating on Hitchens's new career prospects. "He's broken out." ■

e-mail: michael@burnrate.com.

menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (996-0660). (I) ($).*

Tavern on the Green—A must for your country cousin. This mazelike collection of dining rooms, each with a view of the park better than the previous one's, is worth cutting the hansom-cab ride short for. *Central Park at 67th St. (873-3200). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensationa antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-23 0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restauran serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or th reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffe available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak fo four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, a Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole i great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooke pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the weel and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's alway worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offering look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24–01 31st St. at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to thi charming bistro and garden that serves inventive bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis or handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

nightlife

Sebadoh...Billy Nayer Show...'N Sync

Performance

Crazy Shade of Winter

West 52nd Street is an unlikely winter-sports hot spot, but that's exactly what it becomes with the arrival of the "Levi's Sno-Core Tour '99." Along with such noted snow enthusiasts as Everclear, D.J. Spooky, and Soul Coughing (pictured), Sno-Core features the fully interactive "Snowblast Expo," wherein concertgoers can check out the latest snowboard gear—and ride a couple of nifty simulators. Roseland, March 14 (see "Concerts").

Concerts

The Allman Brother Band—Though missing key bro (and lead guitarist) Duane since '71, the Allmans decided to regroup in 1989 to see what magic they could conjure in a Duaneless configuration. In what has now become an annual tradition, these tie-dyed shag-rock torchbearers take over the Upper West Side for a month, cranking out surprisingly lively renditions of their southern-rock classics. 3/8–3/9, 3/11–3/13, 3/15–3/16, 3/18–3/20, 3/22-3/27 at 8. *Beacon Theater, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (307-7171). $35–$50.*

"Cubop: Best of All Worlds"—Bebop and Cuban jazz have been inextricably linked from the get-go, what with Dizzy Gillespie having been down with Mario Bauza while bop was still just a glimmer in his eye. This bill pairs latter-day acts—the Harbor Conservatory Latin Big Band and Havana *sonero* Adalberto Alvarez—of considerably lesser stature than Diz and Bauza, but promises to enlighten nonetheless. 3/13 at 7:30. *Hostos Center for the Performing Arts, 450 Grand Concourse at 149th St., the Bronx (718-518-4455). $25.*

"Dancers and Musicians of Bali"—Gamelan music is, depending on your point of view, either a tinny antecedent to ambient music, or gorgeous, hypnotic, and intriguing in its polyrhythms. Whatever you think of the stuff, that's what you'll get here, along with some of the island nation's stylized yet sensual dance repertoire. 3/12–3/13 at 8. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $25–$40.*

Donald Byrd—Having choreographed the Ellington-inspired *Harlem Nutcracker* in 1994, and *Jazz Train* (with original music by Max Roach, Geri Allen, and Vernon Reid) last year, Byrd is by now a past master at combining jazz and dance. Now, with "Unusual Ellington," the choreographer uses several little-known chamber pieces by the composer as the score to a larger work exploring the African-American experience. 3/9–3/11, 3/13 at 8. 3/14 at 5. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100). $20.*

"Levis Sno-Core Tour '99"—It's a sports exhibition; it's a rock show! Exorcise all that adolescent nervous energy in one fell swoop, thanks to this snowboards-'n'-guitars-a-thon. Supplying the high-energy soundtrack will be a Lollapaloozoid smorgasbord of alternative-nation types: punk-poppers Everclear, jive-turkey beat poets Soul Coughing, native-tongue revivalists Black Eyed Peas, and pomo scratchmaster D.J. Spooky. 3/14 at 6:45. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $27.*

"The Music of Duke Ellington"—Lecture-interviews and demonstrations. Tuesdays at 7:45. 3/9: Gloria (Ms. Ray) Nance. *New School, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5690). $25.*

"Jazz From Japan: Akikazu Nakamura Trio Kokoo and Guests"—Along with percussionist Mino Cinelu, Tokyo multi-instrumentalist and composer Nakamura explores the trippy possibilities of playing jazz on traditional Japanese instruments. 3/12 at 8. *Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155). $20.*

'N Sync—Smells like newly minted cash, is what it smells like. The latest addition to a latter-day teen-pop pantheon that also includes the Back Street Boys and Britney Spears, these five fresh-scrubbed Floridians croon and shimmy their way through blizzards of flying panties every time they perform. Such outpourings of affection are just the most immediately observable evidence of teeny-pop music-biz takeover. 3/12 at 7:30. *Nassau Coliseum, Marshall Field Complex, Uniondale, Long Island (212-307-7171). Sold out.*

"Native American Portraits: A New Look at Cowboys and Indians"—3/14 at 2. Featuring Amran Quartet with Powhatan Swift Eagle and Matoaka Little Eagle, others. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $15–$20.*

Paris Combo—Singer-accordionist Belle du Berry, guitarist Potzi (not to be confused with the *Happy Days* character of the same name), trumpeter David Lewis, bassist Mano, and percussionist François-François. 3/11 at 8. *Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100). $15–$18.*

"Project America: We Shall Overcome—the Musical Voice of Protest"—In much the same spirit as last year's stirring Folkways anniversary gala, this all-star program (which includes Oscar Brand, Odetta, and Josh White Jr.) addresses hot-button issues like women's rights, the labor movement, and, of course, civil rights. Who says activism doesn't exist in music today? You just have to go to the Y to find it. 3/13 at 8. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100). $25.*

"Shall We Pipe? A Japanese-American Celebration of Bagpipe Music"—Whoever programmed this intercontinental extravaganza left the cultural Cuisinart on "overdrive" a few extra minutes: Here we have denizens of the Pacific Rim, in New York, to explore the nasal tones of the Scottish highlands. That's post-modernity for ya. 3/16 at 6:30. *Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155). $12.*

"To Prez With Love: Music, Memories, and Reflections"—At the fifteenth annual Lester Young Memorial Celebration, dozens of player, critics, and commentators put their heads together to do justice to the late, great bop pioneer. Al Grey, Gary Bartz, Jack Jeffers & His New York Classics, Benny Powell, Norman Simmons, Phil Schaap, Bill Easley, Frank Hewitt, others. 3/14 at 7. *Saint Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. (935-2200). $10.*

Clubland

Arlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hippish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 3/10: Johnny Society. 3/11: Punch Havana. 3/12: Sean Altman; Poolsville; Helios. 3/13: Geraniums; Mommy. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 3/12: Kevin Brennan; Annie Minogue; Friday's Child; Surrie Lane. 3/13: John Herald; Jimmy LeFavre; Lezlee Peterzell. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom—The Mercury Lounge's roomy new Lower East Side outpost, where up-and-comers can hone their big-room chops. 3/10: Freestylers; Jungle Brothers. 3/11–3/12: Sebadoh (see box, page 93); Playtopia. *6 Delancey St. (533-2111).*

CBGB Gallery—3/10: When J. P. Olsen moved east from Columbus, Ohio, to upstate New York to take a job as a crime reporter two years ago, the singer-guitarist had no idea he was also gathering material for an album. But, together with a quartet of fellow Ohioans, Olsen turned dyspeptic crime-scene photographers, murderers, and small-town embezzlers into ten beautifully crafted twangy roots-rock numbers. The ensuing disc, *Reviled* (recorded under the name Burn Barrel) is a gutsy and affecting entry into the literary-rock canon. With ever-great country-rockers the Haynes Boys. (Burn Barrel and the Haynes Boys also play the Lakeside Lounge and the Mercury Lounge this week; see listings, below.) *313 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—3/9: Shari Pine. 3/10: Moose &

Photograph by Snorri Brothers.

Talent
Unheimlich Maneuver

Cory McAbee (pictured)—front man of San Francisco's Billy Nayer Show and uneasy-listening crooner par excellence—treats the Mercury Lounge to a night of noirish fantasia March 13 (see "Clubland").

the Bulletproof Blues. 3/11: Sweet Georgia Brown. 3/12–3/13: Roomful of Blues have been revving up their high-octane jump-blues sounds for more years than a lot of the so-called swing revivalists have been *alive*. Ergo, they swing with peerless intensity. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Coney Island High—3/13: The New York Underground Film Festival's traditional penultimate-night soiree, featuring Jimmy Eat World and the Drive In. 3/14: Youthful Seattle trio Modest Mouse keep the great Northwest big-guitar tradition alive. With a novelist's eye for detail, singer-guitarist Isaac Brock charts the endless distances of Western interstates—and between human beings. This show is part of the Underground Film Festival's closing-night shindig. With local 'tude-rockers Les Savy Fav. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

Connolly's—Saturdays, hometown celt-punk heroes Black 47. *14 E. 47th St. (867-3767).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. Sundays: Jackie Beat's "Uptown Lady, Downtown Girl." *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 3/11: Don Cherry's poppy offspring, Eagle Eye Cherry. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The ever-expanding Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, four stages, four microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the biggest names in now music. Chill out in the sub-basement Old Office lounge. 3/9: Italotron. 3/10: DJ Logic; Karen Finley. 3/11: Don Caballero; PW Long's Real Foot; Lifter Puller. 3/12: Joey Baron Trio, with Marc Ribot and Jon Medeski. 3/12: Royal First Family of Funk; Jerome Bigfoot Brailey; Gary Shider. 3/13: Richard Pinhas. 3/14: Dave Douglas's Millennium Bug Improv Party. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055). $*

Lakeside Lounge—3/11: Burn Barrel; the Haynes Boys. (See CBGB Gallery listing, above, for complete information.) *162 Ave. B. (529-8463). $.*

Manny's Car Wash—3/9: Dona Oxford. 3/10: Seth Feinberg. 3/11: Anson Funderburgh; Sam Myers. 3/12: Bill Perry. 3/13: Kerry Kearney. *1558 Third Ave., bet. 87th and 88th Sts. (369-BLUES).*

Maxwell's—3/11: Cibo Matto. 3/13: Waco Bros. 3/14: Wayne Kramer. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—3/9: Burn Barrel; the Haynes Boys (see CBGB Gallery listing, above, for complete information). 3/12: New York's own answer to the Pogues, Rogue's March are all gritty pub rock and scratchy vocals. 3/13: The perfect, elegant antidote to the saccharine kitsch of the cocktail nation, the Billy Nayer Show's Cory McAbee is San Francisco's premier uneasy-listening singer. His delivery—indebted equally to Scott Walker's bile-drenched crooning, Frank Zappa's twisted surrealism, and Harry Nilsson's deceptively sing-song melodicism—defies listeners' ability to parse irony from sincere, if deeply disturbed, intentions. On the Show's new *The Villain That Love Built*, McAbee never breaks mordant character, depicting noirish fantasias filled with wildly unhinged lovers, bunny-chomping demons, and horrifying anatomical irregularities. Backing up all this gore and misbegotten romance is musical director Bobby Lurie's cinematic blend of tittering keyboards, Link Wray guitars, and plain far-out sonic drama—all just as unsettling as McAbee's lyrics. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

S.O.B.'s—The city's premier world-music, reggae, and soul-jazz venue, presenting acts that could fill stadia back home and local talent that might one day do the same here. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 3/8–3/9: Habana Ensemble and Catarsis. 3/10: Kanda Bongo Man. 3.12: Krosfyah. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

Shine—3/11: On his new album *Fuse*, singer-guitarist Joe Henry mines the seventies with conviction and sincerity. Which is a good thing. The disc ranges from twangy country rock to burbling funk workouts to James Taylor–esque folk ruminations. Gimmick-free and great. *285 W. Broadway, at Canal St. (941-0900).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom—and one of the city's best swing-dance venues—with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Fridays and Saturdays at 8, the Supper Club's house big band swings with abandon. 3/12: Jumpin' Gigolos with Eldridge Taylor. 3/13: Big Tubba Mista. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Swing 46—Another Theater District retro- house that draws zoot-suited big-band, jump-blues, and swing-revival fanatics—and the attendant swing-dancing hordes. Is it jazz? Not really. Is it fun? You betcha. Most nights, sets at 10; free dance lessons at 7 and 9. $7–$12 cover; two-drink minimum. Tuesdays in March: Nick Palumbo & the Flipped Fedoras. Wednesdays: The Blue Saracens. Thursdays: George Gee & His Make-Believe Ballroom Orchestra. *349 W. 46th St. (262-9554).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 3/12: Milo Z. 3/13: New Morty Show; Alien Fashion Show; Blue Plate Special. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. *$ = cash only.*

Wetlands—3/8: Hip Hop Jam Session Hosted by the Roots. 3/9: Dick's Picks Vol. 13 CD Release Party; Wig Jam. 3/10: Electro Fetus; X-rayyankeezulu; Wanderlust. 3/12: Groove Collective; Ilatatron. 3/13: Inasense; Moshav. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244). $.*

Jazz

BAMcafé—Inside the venerable Brooklyn Academy of Music is an attractive new jazzerie, with the occasional high-profile name. 3/12: Brooklyn Sax Quartet; Fred Ho; David Bindman. 3/13: Peggi Cone and her Gentlemen. *30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4111).*

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Every Sunday night, Chico O'Farrill's smoking Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra. Every Monday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Every Tuesday, the Mingus Orchestra. Every Friday, the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. $15–$20 cover; $10 minimum. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 3/10: Dave Stryker Quartet. 3/11–3/13: Andrew Hill Sextet. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 3/8: Yoron Israel. 3/9–3/14: Tito Puente Latin Jazz Ensemble. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Flea Theatre—Sets at 8; $10 cover. 3/8: Joel Forrester Trio. 3/9: Claire Daly Trio. *41 White St. (226-0051).*

Iridium—In the cozy basement across from Lincoln center, you'll find some of the finest chow in jazzland, plus formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. 3/9–3/14: Mark Whitfield Quartet. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, living legends, and hungry young comers. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7 , guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10, Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight, Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 3/11–3/14: Carol Sloane Quartet. *116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).*

Red Blazer—Reopened in a new spot, the famed Theater District jazzerie continues to offer up fine sounds. Alternate Thursdays in March, Blue Eyes aficionado Cary Hoffman and the Stan Rubin Orchestra present "Sinatra: The Best of the Fifties." Mondays: Lenore and the Dukes. Tuesdays: Sol Yaged's Swing Band. Wednesdays: Bob Litwak; Scott Hamilton. Fridays: New Yorker Big Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell Jazz Sextet. Sunday Jazz Brunch: Sam Ulano's Bourbon Street Swingers. $10 cover; two-drink minimum. *32 W. 37th St. (262-3112).*

San Martin Restaurant—In the "Jazz at Noon" series, the pros team up with the day-jobbers, and suits and swingers get on down in groovy unison. 3/12: Benny Powell. *143 E. 49th St. (832-0888).*

Savoy Lounge—Nestled beneath the Port Authority Bus Terminal, this truly funky soul-jazz joint features sawdust on the floor, cheap beer in bottles, and a Hammond organ in the corner. $3–$7 cover; no minimum. *355 W. 41st. St. (947-5255). $.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Shows start at 10. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Satur-

Photograph by Caitlin McCaffrey.

day, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 3/9–3/14: Jerry Gonzalez; Fort Apache. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, this hole-in-the-wall shares space with a beauty parlor and has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sundays: Klezmer Sundays. Ensemble Thursdays, trumpeter Steven Bernstein's swinging jazz-party outfit Sexmob. 3/10: Phillip Johnson & Shelley Hirsch. 3/11: Brokeback; Chicago Underground Duo. 3/12: Melvin Gibbs; Lalita; Oshun-Yoruba; Michael Blake's Free Association. 3/13: Elliot Sharp's Terraplane; Dougie Bowne. 3/14: Will Rigby; The Scene Is Now. 3/15: Cat Power's Chan Marshall provides solo piano accompaniment to Carl Theodor Dreyer's 1928 silent film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*—a historical figure with whom the offbeat performer no doubt feels a measure of affinity. *107 Norfolk St. (358-7503). $.*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 3/9–3/21: Tommy Flanagan Trio. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Comedy

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. $12.50–$24.50; two-drink minimum. 3/9: Judy Gold; Edie. 3/11–3/14: Joey Kola. 3/11–3/12: Drew Fraser. 3/14: Plotnick & Rudetsky. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 8:30, 10:15, and midnight; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 3/14: Mitch Fatel; Al Lubel; Dave Attell; Modi; Tom Papa. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat., $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. Through 3/14: Jim Norton; Quentin Heggs; Nancy Redman; Joe Mulligan; Justin McKinney. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights; two-drink minimum. 3/10: "Baby Boomer Humor." *34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Cover is $7–$12. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri. at 7, 9, and 11:30. Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 A.M. 3/12–3/13: William Stephenson; Kevin Brennan; Mike Royce; Andrés Fernandez; Joey Vega. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Upright Citizens Brigade Theater—New York's favorite sketch-comedy troupe, currently in production on its TV show's second season, now has a live theater to call home, too. Not a shabby double-whammy. UCB members perform four nights a week, with other comics taking up the little bit of slack left. All shows $5 or less; call for show times. *161 W. 22nd St. (366-9176). $.*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Fresh from a major overhaul, the Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (early shows Tues-Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.). Through 3/14: Nando Gabrieli; Michael Amante; Michel Hermon. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. Late dining. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Bemelmans Bar—Tuesday–Saturday at 9:30: Peter Mintun. $10 music charge; no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Carlyle—Tuesday–Saturday at 9:30: Eartha Kitt growls and purrs her way into history. Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band. Sets at 8:45 and 10:45. $50 cover ($25 for Davis's late, Woody-free set); no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Eighty-Eight's—A West Village venue whose unassuming façade conceals a top-notch little theater within. $15 cover; two-drink minimum. Every Thursday in March: Natalie Gamsu. Fridays: James Beaman's "Black Market Marlene: A Dietrich Cabaret." *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

Judy's—Newly relocated to Chelsea, this cozy and friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. *169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (929-5410).*

Laurie Beechamn Theatre—3/13: Amanda Green in "Take It Like Amanda." Sets at 8. $15 cover; one-drink minimum. *330 W. 42nd St. (695-7400).*

Talent

Indie Through the Out Door

In the mid-eighties, Lou Barlow started Sebadoh as a low-key side project to his regular band, western Massachusetts's Dinosaur Jr—itself a notoriously slack trio. At first, Sebadoh's "songs"—recorded haphazardly and released in batches of 25 and more on the albums *The Freed Man* and *Weed Forestin*—were post-folk fragments that seesawed between fragile beauty and stony Bread parody. "We didn't think it was charming and cool," says Barlow, 32, of that early sonic scruffiness. "We just didn't want to push each other too hard. It was like, *Do you want to try this? No? Hey, that's cool.*" In 1988, Barlow (pictured, center, with bandmates Russell Pollard and Jason Loewenstein) was kicked out of Dinosaur Jr, making Sebadoh his improbable "real" group and forcing the singer-guitarist, for the first time, to be serious about his own music. The band's subsequent albums have featured fewer but better-crafted tunes than its earlier efforts, and Sebadoh has crept incrementally toward polish. "With this record"—the new disc *The Sebadoh*, the group's eighth —"it was like, *No way are we gonna make a record we don't like the sound of again,*" Barlow says. "But I guess I've said that about every record since our third one." This evolution has had strange ancillary effects. Though Sebadoh's stock in trade continues to be the juxtaposition of unapologetically emotional lyrics, distinctively off-kilter riffs, and insistent beats, the band now occasionally finds itself playing the kind of music its underground origins aimed to escape. Seeking, for instance, to distinguish "Tree"—a ballad on *The Sebadoh* with a trippy, backward-masked guitar solo and the hippie-ish refrain "See how much we've grown"—from the early-seventies AM pop that inspired it, Barlow cites the song's intentionally lo-fi drum sound but not much else. And in fact, Barlow notes that both Sebadoh and his new side project, the Folk Implosion, now have record contracts that put them within spitting distance of the mainstream. "We used to be, how do you say, indie," he jokes. "Now Sebadoh is working with Sire, and the Folk Implosion is on Interscope. I'm fully corporate rock, just when corporate rock is at its weakest ever." Sebadoh plays the Bowery Ballroom March 11 and 12.

ETHAN SMITH

the mix

Dress for Success...Tom Wolfe

John Leonard's TV Notes

A Walk up Broadway With David Hartman and Historian Barry Lewis (3/10; 8 to 9 P.M.; Channel 13) ambles agreeably from Wall Street to the Cloisters, with stops to chat about Algonquin Indians and Fort Amsterdam, the Custom House and the African burial ground, Walt Whitman and Tin Pan Alley, Bette Midler in the Ansonia and Malcolm X in the Audubon Ballroom. It may interest you to know that long before Rudy introduced us to government-by-obedience-training, cops loved chasing loiterers away from Broadway and 23rd Street— thus, the phrase *23 skiddoo!*

New York the Way It Was: Greenwich Village (3/13; 8 to 9 P.M.; WLIW21), although it seems to have forgotten that there was a vibrant downtown bohemia long before World War II, is nonetheless wonderfully nostalgic about the neighborhood as it has been reflected in the pages of the *Village Voice,* with archival clips and loving sound bites from the likes of Oscar Brand, Pete Hamill, Larry Rivers, Mary Travers, Jonas Mekas, David Amram, Nat Hentoff, Ellen Stewart, Jerry Orbach, Art D'Lugoff, Judy Collins, and many more, with Martin Duberman for gay pride and Ed Koch for black humor. ("I was Beat once too, at the Amato Opera.")

Mr. Music (3/14; 8 to 9:30 P.M.; Showtime) requires Mick Fleetwood, a record exec at a failing label, to hire 15-year-old Jonathan Tucker as his veep for talent, only to have a publicity stunt turn into a financial windfall when Tucker discovers a hip band, produces a hit record, and reminds Mick why he rocked before he rolled. Nice high-school and radio-studio stuff; songs by Graham Nash and Pat Benatar; surprising performances by Caramel and Treble Charger.

Replacing Dad (3/14; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) is worth watching because Mary McDonnell is worth watching in anything, even this weepie uplift about a homebody wife and mom whose high-school-principal husband, William Russ, leaves her for his daughter's fifth-grade teacher, after which she mopes around in her bathrobe while the roof leaks and the children freak until . . . well, Jack Coleman is just the sort of doctor Mary's mom might have ordered from Sears if a mom like Tippi Hedren ever shopped by catalogue. We won't get into the rabbit suit, the exercise program, the dyslexia, or the gun.

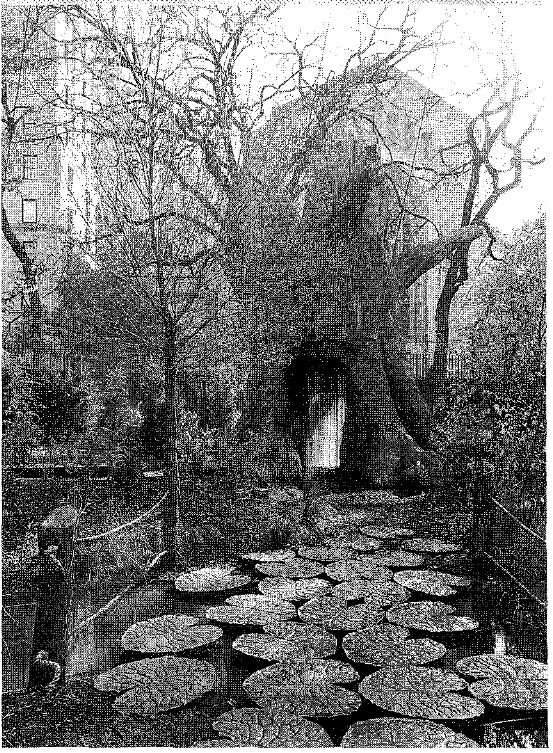
Payne (preview 3/15, 9:30 to 10 P.M.; Wednesdays thereafter, 8:30 to 9 P.M.; CBS) is *Fawlty Towers* transmigrated from British TV to the California coast, where John Larroquette and JoBeth Williams run the Whispering Pines resort hotel into the ground, with the help of a staff composed of the usual hysterics, a roster of guests ranging from drag queens to Christian fundamentalists, and a list of jokes from the usual sitcom menu of forgotten anniversaries to babies in laundry hampers to nudists in the lobby. The surprise here is JoBeth's terrific comic timing.

Private Dicks: Men Exposed (3/15; 11 P.M. to midnight; HBO) is exactly what it says it is, plus lots of talk about the same by full-frontal nude males of various ages, orientations, foreskin colors, and traumatic memories mixed with snippets from fifties sex-education films and detumescent magazine cartoons. The whole thing is almost as embarrassing as Bob Dole's TV commercial about "erectile dysfunction."

Happening

The Little Schoolhouse That Could

Acquire fabulous art (like the photograph by Lisa Clifford pictured below) and help the little people at a silent auction to benefit the Little Red Schoolhouse scholarship fund. At Thread Waxing Space, March 11 to March 13; see "Benefits" for details.



Radio Highlights

Everything Old Is New Again and Jazz Sampler—Sunday nights at 9 P.M. and 11 P.M: The music of Broadway, Hollywood, and Tin Pan Alley, from Ira Gershwin to Cole Porter. Then stay tuned for the best of jazz with host Bill Farrar. Both of these programs are intended to embrace the listeners who've lost their beloved WQEW to the hands of Disney. WBAI, 99.5 FM.

The Written Word

Francine Prose and Richard Price—3/9 at 7 P.M.: Reading at the Russian Samovar, 256 W. 52nd St. (872-1678); $3.

Selected Shorts—3/10 at 7 P.M.: Leslie Uggams will read John Edgar Wideman's "The Songs of Reba Love Jackson." Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400); $17.

Nicholas Sparks—3/10 at 7:30 P.M.: Discusses writing *The Notebook* and *Message in a Bottle*. Marymount Manhattan College, The Writing Center, 221 E. 71st St. (517-0564); $50 for reserved seating or free general admission.

Anne Arensberg, Carol Brightman—3/10 at 7 P.M.: Reading from *Incubus* and *Sweet Chaos,* respectively. The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. (219-2166); $5.

Sherman Alexie and U Sam Oeur—3/10 at 8 P.M.: The authors read from recent work. Poetry Project/St. Marks Church, 131 E. 10th St. (674-0910); $7.

Alex Garland—3/11 at 7:30 P.M.: The author of *The Beach* reads from his latest, *The Tesseract*. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (362-8835); free.

Jan Clausen—3/11 at 7 P.M.: Reading from *Apples & Oranges.* Posman Books, 1 University Pl. (533-2665); free.

National Jewish Book Awards—3/11 at 7:30 P.M.: Awards for writing on history, the Holocaust, Israel, Jewish-Christian relations, Jewish scholarship, Sephardic and Ashkenazic culture, fiction, nonfiction, women's studies, memoir, education, and children. 92nd St. Y's Kaufmann Concert Hall, 1395 Lexington Ave. (532-4949, ext. 297); free.

Jane Cooper and Sharon Olds—3/14 at 2 P.M.: Poems about Cooper's childhood in the South and Olds adolescence in California. Wave Hill, 249 Independence Ave. Bronx (718-549-3200); free, reservations are required.

Tom Wolfe—3/15 at 8 P.M.: At the Unterberg Poetr Center, 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $15.

"Open Door"—3/16 & 3/23 at 7 P.M.: Readings an workshops for people living with AIDS, their partners, their families, and friends. St. John's Episcopa Church, 222 W. 11th St. (243-6192); free.

Lectures and Panels

"Bucharest in Paris: Writers With a Doubl Passport"—3/11 at 7 P.M.: With Norma Manea, author of *October, On Clowns,* an *Compulsory Happiness*. French Institute Allianc Francaise, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6160); $8.

"Halftone Printing in the Yiddish Press"—3/11 at

Photograph by Lisa Clifford

P.M.: An illustrated lecture with Ben Katchor. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5.

"Get Up and Garden!"—3/13 at 10 A.M.: A full day of tours, talks, workshops, plant information, and more to give you a jump on spring. The New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., Bronx (718-817-8700); $2.50-$6.50.

"A Conversation With Cynthia Heimel"—3/16 at 6 P.M.: the author of *A Girl's Guide to Chaos* and *But Enough About You* speaking as part of the "Art and Craft of Humor Writing" series. New York Public Library, Celeste Bartos Forum, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (930-0571); $10.

"Developing a Successful Restaurant"—3/16 at 8:15 P.M.: With George Lang of Cafe des Artistes and Drew Nieporent of Nobu, TriBeCa Grill, and Montrachet. Hosted by Leonard Lopate. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $18.

Benefits

Tickled Pink—3/10 at 6:30 P.M.: Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and the comedy of Judy Gold, Cory Kahaney, and Wanda Sykes Hall, to raise awareness for breast cancer early detection. In conjunction with Race for the Cure. Caroline's Comedy Club, 1626 Broadway at 50th St. (293-0570); $75-$80.

Little Red Schoolhouse Scholarship Fund Benefit—3/11–3/13: A silent auction at Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway (254-4983).

New Faces of 1710—3/15 at 7:30 P.M.: The New York City Opera celebrates its spring season with an evening of Baroque music, including supper with strolling violins and dancing. Performances by Amy Burton, Phyllis Pancella, David Daniels, Sanford Sylvan, Valerian Ruminski, and Bradley Brookshire. The New York State Theater, 63rd St. and Columbus Ave. (870-5622); $500-$10,000.

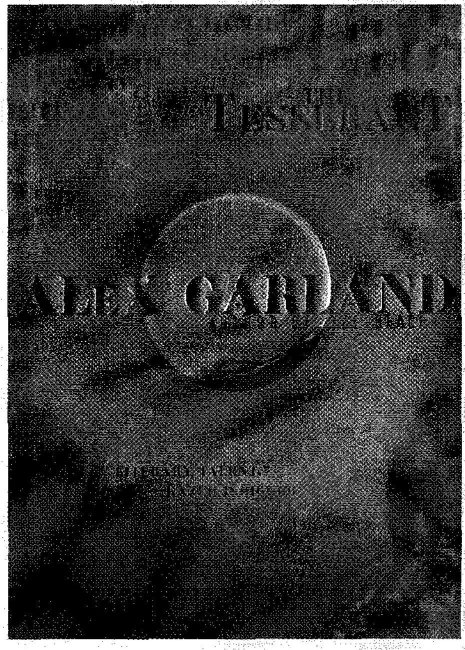
A Musical Celebration of Broadway—3/15 at 7:30 P.M.: The black-tie benefit for the Drama League will feature honorary chair Julie Andrews, honoree Rosie O'Donnell, and a revue cast with stars from Broadway, Hollywood, and the music industry, including the *Fosse* dancers and *Cabaret* star Alan Cumming. The Pierre Hotel, 5th Ave., at 61st St. (302-2100); $375.

Dress for Success—3/16 from 11 A.M. till 2 P.M.: Get rid of all the stuff in your closet that just isn't you and help low-income women seeking employment put together an interview wardrobe at this yearly clothing drive. Appropriate donations include new or well-maintained suits, blouses, pants, shoes, and scarves. Drop-offs accepted at Fashion Group International headquarters, 597 Fifth Ave., at 48th St., Eighth Floor (973) 386-1776; call 545-DFNY for other drop-off times and locations. If you're more in the mood for a party, there's the "Grand Swinging Masquerade Ball and Auction;" 3/13 at 8 P.M. Waldorf-Astoria, Park Ave. at 50th St. (727-8270); $150-$30,000.

In Print

These Books Are Made for Walking

Should you find yourself in one of Asia's less expensive destinations anytime soon, you'll quickly become accustomed to the ways of the backpacker: a species of low-budget travelers in their twenties or thirties, from Australia or Europe or maybe even America, searching for exotic adventures and mango groves in a land where nobody cares where you went to college. In Katmandu, he or she will be reading *The Snow Leopard,* by Peter Matthiessen, and on Bangkok's Ko Sanh Road (picture St. Marks Place in Thailand), you won't make it past three café tables without spotting a copy of Alex Garland's *The Beach,* an exceptional first novel that doubles as a user's manual on backpacker culture. "I haven't been back to Thailand in a while," says Garland, a native Londoner. "I've heard the book is popular with backpackers there, and I do get a lot of letters from them, but if *The Beach* is part of their experience, it's a very small part—a leaf on a palm," he says enigmatically. In his new novel, *The Tesseract,* Garland has shifted his attention from mendicant youths to the violent world of barely organized crime in Manila. "I spent six months there, and I wasn't really doing anything," he says. "In retrospect, I was gathering material." At 28, Garland is already an experienced traveler—he has been to Asia every year since he was 17—but he isn't a bit pleased to be embarking on his book tour, or to be coming to New York. "I grew up in a big Western city, and all big Western cities are the same. I'd much rather go to the Grand Canyon." Sorry, kiddo, Arizona just isn't on the circuit. Catch the reluctant but gifted Garland at the Upper West Side Barnes & Noble on March 11 at 7:30 P.M. **ARIEL LEVY**



Events

The Triple Pier Expo—3/13 & 3/14: Art, furniture, silver, paintings, glass, pottery, textiles, jewelry, toys, vintage fashion, and more from 600 exhibitors. Passenger Terminal Piers 88, 90, and 92, on 12th Ave. between 48th and 55th Sts. (255-0020); $10.

New York Armory Antiques—3/10–3/14: One hundred dealers offering seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century American, English, French, and Continental antiques. 7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 67th St. (914-698-3442); $10.

Tours

"The Hidden Charms of Chelsea: Seminary, Brownstones, and Shocking Inhabitants"—3/13 at 1 P.M.: Explore a neighborhood that started as one man's eighteenth-century farm and has become a hub of fashion, food, and art. Stops include landmarks of the silent-film industry, chapels, the far west art scene, and more. Meet at the General Theological Seminary, at 9th Ave. between 20th and 21st Sts. (242-5762); $12.

"Harlem Gospel Walking Tour"—Sundays at 10 A.M.: Learn about the area and visit a gospel church service. Call 718-204-5133 for meeting place and reservations; $15.

Exhibitions

"America and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954–1968"—Through 3/19: Rarely seen and classic photographs by Ben Fernandez, Bruce Davidson, Declan Haun, Nat Herz, James Karales, Charles Moore, Eve Arnold, and others. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); free.

"Woody Allen's Television Days"—Through 3/21: A screening of Allen's television work on variety and late-night talk shows. The Museum of Television & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800); $3-$6.

"New York's Finest: A History of the New York City Police Department"—Through 3/21: Enter this 3,000-square-foot exhibition of early-nineteenth-century police memorabilia through a "dark alley" echoing with screams and gunshots that evoke the dangers of policing New York in Colonial times. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); $5.

"Secrets of a Beautiful Face"—Through 4/11: An

GAME WEEK

HOME ● AWAY ●

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
KNICKS		MIL MSG 7:30PM		WAS MSG 7:30PM	CHI MSG 8:30PM		CHA MSG 7:30PM
NETS		CHI FSNY 8:30PM	IND FSNY 7PM		PHI FSNY 7PM		MIA NBC 12PM
RANGERS	TOR MSG 7:30PM		OTT MSG 7:30PM		BOS METRO 7:30PM		NYI FOX 3PM
ISLANDERS		PHI WLNY 7:30PM		TOR FSNY 7:30PM			NYR FOX 3PM
DEVILS		PIT METRO 7:30PM					
	3/8	3/9	3/10	3/11	3/12	3/13	3/14

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Competition *continued from page 111*

Xaviera Hollander for Frito-Lay
Dede Persson, Mundelein, Ill.

Heidi Fleiss for Trix
Jane Kretzmann, Vienna, Va.

Cesar Romero for Cisco Systems
Alice Kantor, Newburyport, Mass.

Icarus for Coppertone
Jarret Mackenzie, Calgary, Alb.

Willie Mosconi for Q-Tips
Greg Edwards, Denton, Tex.

Jane Goodall for the NBC Typing Pool
Mark Paladini, Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Jack Kevorkian for the Grateful Dead
Russell Whaley, Lakeland, Fla.

Tinky Winky for the 700 Club
D. C. Capps, N.Y.C.

Bob Barr for Seville
Leonard Greenberg, Sterling, Va.

Al D'Amato for Benihana
Beverly Munter, Plainview, N.Y.

John Elway for Tydee Bowl
L. Simon, Cambridge, N.Y.

Jed Clampett for Ritz Crackers
Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park, Md.

Leon Spinks for the Egyptian Touwism Board
Paul Busman, D.P.M., Troy, N.Y.

Anne Meara for Ben and Jerry's
Alan Levine, Massapequa, N.Y.

Stanley Kubrick for Polaroid
Michael O'Neal, Des Moines, Iowa

Pauly Shore for Smith Barney
Charles Archibald, Springfield, Mo.

Florence Griffith Joyner for Mrs. Dash
Laura Neal, Reigate, Surrey, U.K.

Peter Falk for Colombo Yogurt
Rachel Shea, Cromwell, Conn.

Dolly the Sheep for Xerox
Sandy Goldstein, Hoboken, N.J.

The Marquis de Sade for Kinko's
Sonja Weiss, N.Y.C.

Richard I for *The Lion King*
Joel F. Crystal, Scarsdale, N.Y.

Greta Garbo for the Welcome Wagon
Alexa Geller, West Hartford, Conn.
sp. ment.: A. P. Martellaro, Dunmore, Pa.

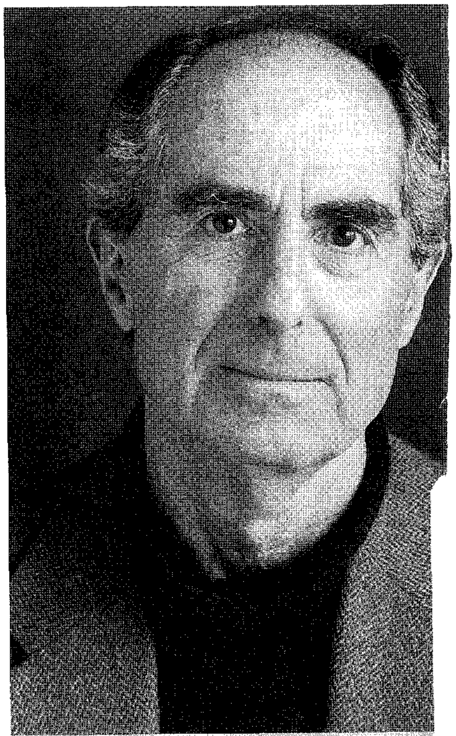
Yma Sumac for Serutan
Denise Reiss, Los Angeles, Calif.

The Spice Girls for Pop Tarts
Michael D. Valentine, Norfolk, Va.

The Artist Formerly Known As Prince for the Car Formerly Known as Datsun
Jack Greenfield, Satellite Beach, Fla.

Donald Trump for Donald Trump
Louis Phillips, N.Y.C.

Rules: Postcards, please, typed if possible. **ONE ENTRY ONLY** to Competition Number 936, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999. E-mail to 104700.2563@compuserve.com, **WITH STREET ADDRESS.** Entries must be received by March 19. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of *New York.* Results and winners' names will appear in the April 19 issue.



Happening **The 49th annual National Jewish Book Awards pits consummate kibitzer Leon Wieseltier against Yaffa Eliach and bestows a lifetime-achievement award upon Jewish bad-boy-made-good Philip Roth (above). Be there for the kvelling and the crying at (where else?) the 92nd Street Y on March 11 at 7:30 P.M.**

exhibition exploring developments in grooming products and conceptions of beauty for men and women during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through advertisements and packaging, mirrors and dressing tables. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); $3–$5.

"*Bar Mitzvah*: David Mamet and Donald Sultan"—Through 6/6: Twenty drawings by Sultan accompanied by Mamet's text, from their new book. The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3271); $8.

"Seinfeld's Diner"—Through 8/1: The set of the famous diner frequented by Jerry, Kramer, Elaine, and George is on display along with props and costumes. American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077); $4.50–$8.50.

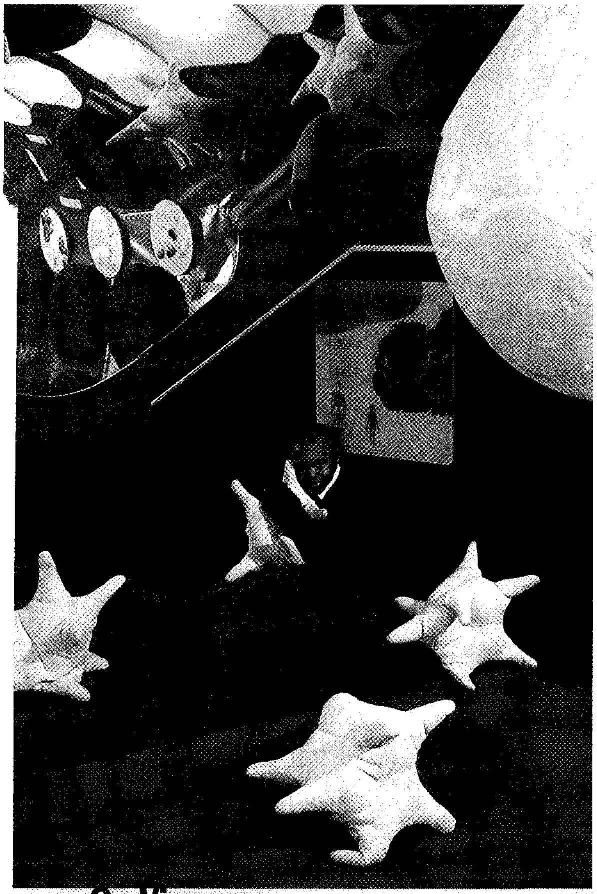
Online

New York Magazine on the Web—"Stephanie's Surf Report" (in the "Today" section of www.newyorkmag.com) visits a new Website each weekday. This week: Give to your favorite charity with every e-dollar you spend; anticipate spring by flying into the wind (with a kite); uncover the weird and wacky part of the WWW; visit Edward Carter Gallery in its clickable form; and create your own radio station in minutes. But while you're in the neighborhood at www.nymag.com, stick around and check out all our other great features, like selected articles from the current issue, an extensive archive, and an expanded "Cue" section, plus web exclusives like daily events from Angie Maximo, "First Words" for bibliophiles, our helpful Subscriber Service Center, and a New York trivia contest. So surf us, already.

Photograph by Nancy Crampton.

kids

Flea Circus...Ringling Bros.



On View
Inside Story

Eating French fries just won't be the same for youngsters who have clambered over a seven-foot tongue—into the soft passages of the digestive and respiratory systems—and figured out how to activate a burp. Next week, "Body Odyssey," a 4,000-square-foot exhibit, opens, and with it a new wing of the Children's Museum of Manhattan. Younger children can wage hand-puppet battles between invading germs and the immune protectors, or slide into the blood stream and roll around with red and white blood cells (pictured). Opens March 19; see "Children's Events."

Children's Events

lood and Guts—Pick a scab; compare heart beats, at "Body Odyssey" (see photo), a new exhibit at the **CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF MANHATTAN** that lets you romp through your innards. Opens March 19. 212 W. 83rd St. (721-1234). Admission is $5, $2.50 for seniors.

low and Then—Monthly "Reel to Real" events, for families with kids ages 4 to 14, use old cinema as a springboard for live events. "Tin Pan Alley Tune Up," a program about songwriting with cabaret singer Steve Ross, treats audiences to clips from several old movies, including *Three Little Words,* starring Fred Astaire and Red Skeleton. Finally, Ross and the audience collaborate in writing a song for the new millennium. 3/21 at 11 and 1:30. **WALTER READE THEATER**, Lincoln Center (875-5370). Individual tickets are $10, $6 for kids under 17.

Levitation—Don Miller, court jester and magician-in-residence at the Indianapolis Zoo, makes one audience member float—and another one disappear—this week at **CAROLINE'S KIDS KLUB** (a.k.a. Caroline's Comedy Club). For children ages 3 and up. 3/13 and 3/14 at 2. 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100); $12.●

Godspell—An intimate revival of the seventies megahit musical, performed by the financially endangered but spiritually undaunted **NEW YORK YOUTH THEATER.** Through 3/20. Seventh floor, Central Presbyterian Church, 593 Park Ave., at 64th St. (242-2822). Reservations recommended; $12, $10 for kids under 15.

String Quartet—In its only New York appearance, the Emerson String Quartet plays a **CARNEGIE HALL** family concert that's a bargain into the bargain. 3/20 at 2. Preconcert activities with storyteller Charlotte Blake Alston begin an hour earlier. 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800); $5.●

In the Ring—The visual climax of Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus this year is the elaborately choreographed "World's Only Living Carousel." Two hundred human and animal performers participate in the moving tableau. John Lee Iverson, a 23-year-old Manhattanite, is the youngest-ever ringmaster. Apparently a former member of Boys Choir of Harlem, Iverson uses his operatic tenor to sing as well as speak. Arrive an hour early for a chance to fool around in the ring with the clowns. 3/16 to 3/22, **NASSAU COLISEUM**; 3/26 to 4/11, **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN** (307-7171 or www.Ringling. com.). Tickets are $10.50 to $42.50.

Inappropriate—An aptly named play when it comes to younger children. Written by students at the DeSisto School (and based on real-life stories), the play looks squarely at tough issues adolescents face about their sexual identity, drug use, violence, and search for acceptance. Performed by the **DESISTO THEATRE ENSEMBLE**—a group of kids ages 15 to 18—with original songs and score by Michael Sottile. Through 3/21. Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. (279-4200); $30.

Tree Hugging—Meet an African God of Rain and a Prince who thought he was a rooster when storyteller Vered Hankin, (accompanied by Steve Roiphe on guitar, Irish flute, drums, and harmonica) dives into some important questions like what do trees talk about? 3/13 at 1:30. **WEST END CHILDREN'S THEATRE**, 2911 Broadway, bet. 113th and 114th Sts. (877-6115); $10. Reservations are required.●

Tarot's Gypsy Circus—East Indian marionettes with Leela Puppet Theatre perform in an exotic miniature circus. 3/13 to 3/14 at 10:30 and noon. **LENNY SUIB PUPPET PLAYHOUSE**, Mazur Theatre, 555 E. 90th St. (369-8890, ext. 159); $6.●

Web Design—**THEATREWORKS** presents *Charlotte's Web,* E. B. White's beloved story about friendship (between a spider and a pig), 3/13 and 3/14. Next week's production of *Ramona Quimby* is about a spirited elementary-school student all kids feel they know (3/20 and 3/21). Promenade Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. Shows are intended for children over 4 (children in arms and strollers will not be admitted). Performances, which are about an hour long, begin at 12:30. Individual tickets are $18.50.

Underground—Theater Grottesco, a Santa Fe–based ensemble group, blends medieval buffoonery with circus technique to explore modern issues of community, diversity, homelessness, and survival. Suitable for kids 10 and up. Through 3/14. **NEW VICTORY THEATER**, 209 W. 42nd St (239-6200); $10–$25.●

Finding the Moral—A sophisticated musical puppet production of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince,* a kind of reverse *It's a Wonderful Life* story, through 4/4 at **W. SCOTT MCLUCAS THEATER**, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737); $18 for adults, $12 for children under 12.

Enterprising Orphan—A 12-year-old waif disguises herself as a boy, escapes the orphanage, and joins a flea circus in Victorian England in a family opera with all the elements of a good story. Based on *Little Kit, or the Industrious Flea Circus Girl,* by Emily Arnold McCully, the play has a musical score by Charles Greenberg and libretto by Barbara Zinn Krieger—executive director and founder of the Vineyard Theater (which co-produced the opera). Recommended for children over 4. Previews begin 3/12; through 3/28. **TRIBECA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**, 199 Chambers St. (346-8510); $13 for adults, $8 for kids under 13.

Listening for the Beat—"Family Saturdays" are foot-tapping music and dance concerts, given twice each Saturday afternoon in March. This second week—the only one *without* live music—the Okra Dance Company in "Dance, Dance, Dance II" takes audiences on a tour of Liberia, Hawaii, Ireland, and the Caribbean islands in search of dances with distinctive local rhythms. 3/13 at 1 and 3. Next week, Mickey D. and friends invite preschoolers through third-graders to join in a participatory program of "Mellow Moves," 3/13. **CONTEXT MUSIC STUDIO**, 28 Ave. A (bet. 2nd and 3rd Sts.; 718-963-2081); $10 for adults, $5 for children, with special packages available. ●

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

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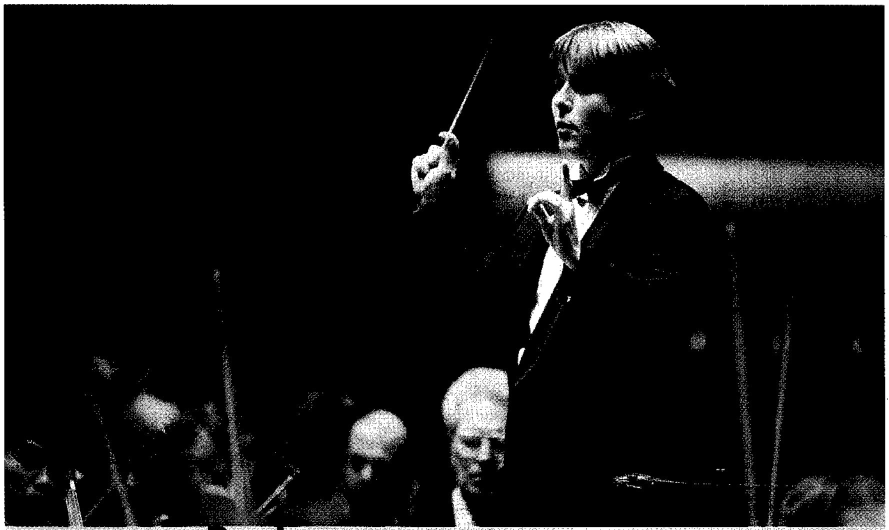

Previews

Strong Finnish

Maybe it's just to avoid the pre-Oscar madness of L.A., but Esa-Pekka Salonen (above) and the Los Angeles Philharmonic swing into town Thursday, Friday, and Sunday as part of Lincoln Center's Great Performers series. Music by American composers will predominate, including the New York premieres of works by William Kraft and John Adams and an all-American concert by the orchestra's New Music Group on Thursday.

Classical Music

Tuesday, March 9

New York Philharmonic—Performs Beethoven's *Coriolan* Overture and *Ah! perfido,* and Mahler's Symphony No. 4, with soprano Amanda Roocroft. Gisèle Ben-Dor, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $14–$73.*

Concertante Chamber Players—Perform Borodin's String Sextet, Brahms's Piano Quintet in F major, and Elgar's Piano Quintet in A minor. *Merkin Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $15.*

Paul O'Dette, Lute—Performs music for Renaissance lute. *Weill Recital Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; sold out.*

Wednesday, March 10

Tafelmusik—Performs works by Vivaldi, Geminiani, Von Biber, and Telemann, on period instruments. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 8; $30.*

Vienna Philharmonic—Performs Mozart's Symphonies No. 38 in D major, No. 36 in C major, and No. 40 in G minor. Riccardo Muti, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $30–$150.*

Thursday, March 11

Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group—Performs a program of works by Revueltas, Kraft, Levinson, and other American composers. Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5788), at 8; $25*

New York Philharmonic—Performs Creston's Partita, Bartók's Violin Concerto No. 2, with violinist Gil Shaham, and Brahms's Symphony No. 2. Paavo Järvi, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $14–$73.*

Vienna Philharmonic—A gala benefit performance of Schumann's Symphony No. 2 in C major and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5 in D minor. Riccardo Muti, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $30–$150.*

Friday, March 12

Los Angeles Philharmonic—Performs Haydn's Symphony No. 8, Britten's Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings, and Mozart's Mass in C minor. With soprano Barbara Bonney, mezzo Susanne Mentzer, tenor Paul Groves, and others. Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $25–$47.*

New York Philharmonic—See 3/11, at 11 A.M.

Vienna Philharmonic—Performs Schubert's Symphony No. 3 in D major and Tchaikovsky's *Manfred.* Riccardo Muti, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $30–$150.*

Saturday, March 13

Little Orchestra Society—Performs *Tubby the Tuba and the Big Brass,* a program of pieces for brass by Mozart, Bach, and others, as part of the Lolli-Pops concert series for children. *Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (971-9500), at 10:30 A.M. and noon; $32.*

New York Chamber Symphony—Performs the world premiere of Stock's *A Little Miracle* and Beethoven's *Prometheus* Overture and Symphony No. 3. With mezzo Vivica Genaux. Gerard Schwarz, conductor. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5788), at 8; $35.*

New York Philharmonic—See 3/11.

Sunday, March 14

American Composers Orchestra—Performs *Cuba: Sonidos de las Américas,* a program of new music by Cuba composers, with pianist Santiago Rodriguez. Dennis Russell Davies, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 88 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 3; $15–$45.*

Olga Borodina, Mezzo-Soprano, and Dmitri Yefimov Piano—Perform songs by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, and Mussorgsky. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5788), at 2; $35.*

Little Orchestra Society—See 3/13, at 12:30 and 2.

Los Angeles Philharmonic—Performs the New York premiere of Adams's *Naive and Sentimental Musi* and excerpts from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 3; $25–$47.*

New York Chamber Symphony—See 3/13.

Opera

Amato Opera—Performs Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* 3/13 at 7:30 and 3/14 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (228-8200); $23.*

Metropolitan Opera—Performs Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina,* 3/9 at 7:30 and 3/13 at 1:30; Puccini's *La Bohème,* 3/11 at 8; Verdi's *Rigoletto,* 3/12 and 3/15 at 8 and Verdi's *Il Trovatore,* 3/13 at 8. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $25–$210.*

New York City Opera—Performs Beeson's *Lizzie Borden,* 3/10 at 7:30 and 3/13 at 8; Puccini's *Madame Butterfly,* 3/11 at 7:30 and 3/14 at 1:30; and Puccini's *La Bohème,* 3/12 at 8 and 3/13 at 1:30. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $20–$90.*

Dance

David Appel—Performs his new solo work, *This Roiling World,* with music by David Weinstein, 3/12 and 3/13 at 8. *Joyce Soho, 155 Mercer St. (334-7479); $15*

Donald Byrd/The Group—Performs "Unusual Ellington," a program of works based on lesser-known Ellington tunes, 3/9–3/11 and 3/13 at 8, and 3/14 at 5. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (996-1100 or 415-5553); $20.*

DanceGalaxy—Performances of new works by William Forsythe, Michael Smuin, Ginger Thatcher, and others in the company's debut, 2/9–2/12 at 8, 2/13 at 2 and 8, and 2/14 at 2 and 7:30. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $28*

Paul Taylor Dance Company—Performs *Oh, You Kid! Fiddlers Green, A Field of Grass,* and other works 3/9–3/12 at 8, 3/13 at 2 and 8, and 3/14 at 3 and 7:30. *City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212) $25–$55.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

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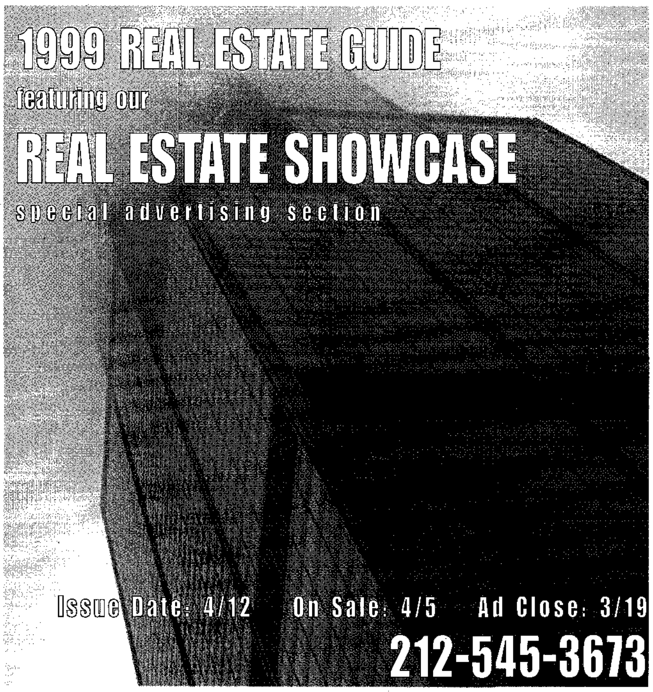

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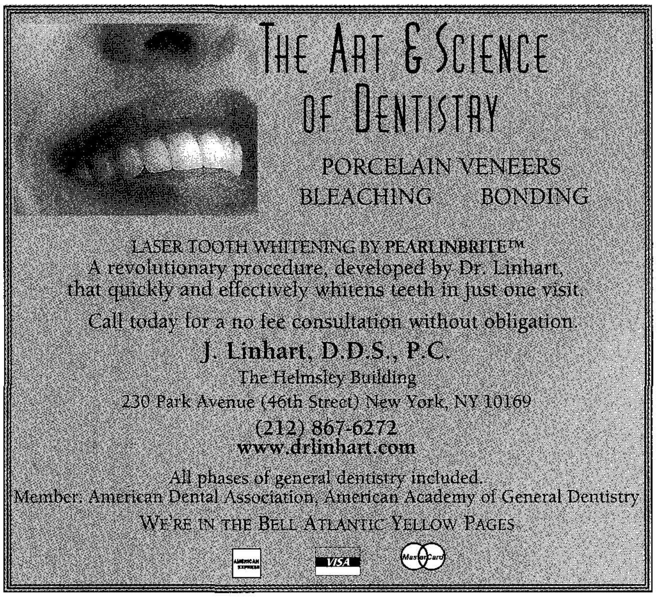

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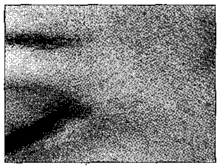

After

TREATS:

- Blackheads, Whiteheads
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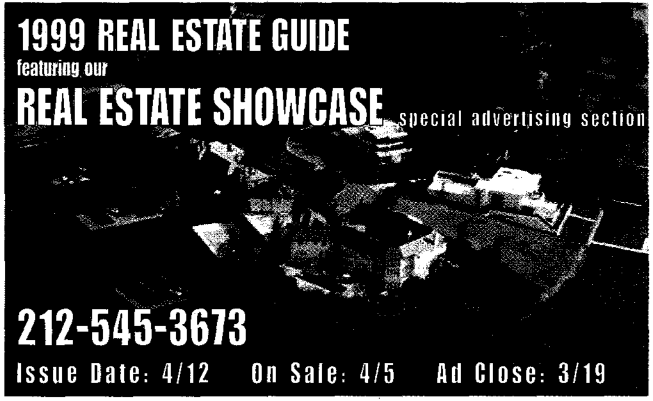

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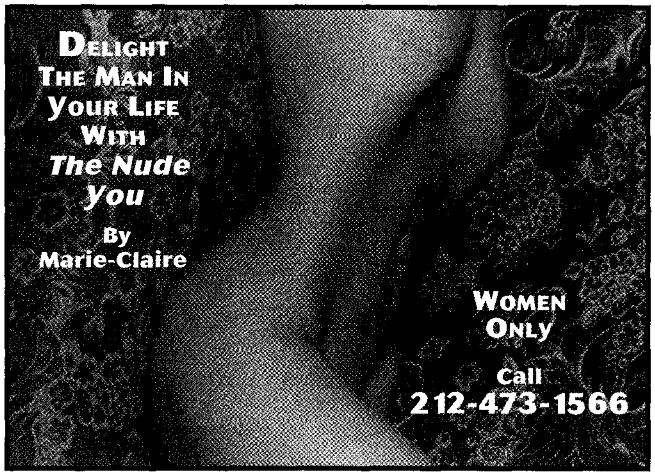

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Dinner & Drinks Woman—It took a lot of beers to convince me to write this ad. Never thought I'd meet my match on these pages, but giving it a shot. I'm a tall, attractive woman, 33, with long blond hair, who loves to work hard, play hard, hang out and have fun. I smoke for now, but work out at the gym too. If you are laid-back, a little wild but really well-adjusted and responsible, that's a good start. Also, 33 or older and 5'11" *plus is even better. Please send letter* and photo. 7401 ✉

Make Love Bloom!—With a dynamic, caring CEO, a loving, handsome Renaissance man with passion, warmth, humor, 5'10", lean, 43, into fitness, travel. Seeks bright woman under 38, for the real thing. Phone/photo necessary. 7479 ✉☎

I Am Petite, Blond, Pretty—Very bright, vitally alive, extremely modest. I love NY, its energy, its restaurants, its access to everything. I love the wilderness, its awesome beauty, getting really sweaty and dirty. I love tennis, skiing, water sports; I detest sitting on the beach. I love to travel (I want to go everywhere). I love to read. I love to eat, to dance, to laugh. *I consider myself adventurous - or I* wouldn't be writing this ad. Write or call. Let's see what happens. 7444 ✉

Elegant, Intelligent—Model-like beauty seeks tall, educated man of style and substance, 48-60. Photo/note. 7393 ✉

Ivy Beauty—Seeks fit, tall, witty soul mate, 45-55. Prefer MDs. 7334 ✉ ☎

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Birthday Resolution—To continue dating with singular goal of finding lifetime mate. Blue-eyed, successful Manhattan professional, athletic male, 5'8", 47, fit, with good looks and senses of humor/integrity/family/wonder, seeks one upbeat, warm, fit, beautiful (in/out), bright, slender woman to share romance and life's surprises. Photo/note. 7336 ✉☎

Magic Moments—Very pretty, very kind, Ivy professional, Jewish mom, 40s, slim, sexy, athletic, seeking a special man for forever. Phone/photo. 7394 ✉ ☎

Gay White Male—Attractive, 60s, Paul Newman type, in-shape, 5'11", 165 lbs, financially secure non-smoker seeks same for relationship that makes sense. Photo and sincerity a must. 7486 ✉

Stunning Upscale Beauty—Imagine a 5'7", slim, in-great-shape former model, warm, bright, Jewish, beautiful, playful, stylish, cultured, financially secure, with high standards. I am passionate about city and country pursuits and travel, and am seeking a tall, fit, good-looking, elegant, kind, well-bred, well-heeled, communicative Jewish mensch, 47-60, emotionally available for shared interests - ready to enjoy a wonderful, romantic, caring, committed, permanent relationship. Photo, short bio and phone a must. 7291 ✉☎

Movie-Star Good Looks—Top male financial exec, trim, 6', 49. Warm, caring, communicative, sensitive, romantic, witty, cerebral, athletic, physical. Seeks female counterpart, 35-55, for permanent relationship. Note/photo a must. 7468 ✉

Seeking High-Maintenance Female—Companion for world travel, by early-retirement entrepreneur. You only pass this way one time - why not do it in style? Age to 35. Intelligence and sense of humor required. Please send information regarding age, height, weight, plus photo and note too. 7472 ✉

Winter Rendezvous—Very pretty, sexy, sophisticated Jewish female, avid film and theater-goer, rock 'n' roll enthusiast, seeking 35-50-year-old, handsome, successful Jewish male professional, 5'9"-6'1", for friendship, romance and lasting relationship. Manhattan and surrounding suburbs preferred. Photo a must. Note/phone. 7340 ✉ ☎

Sleek And Striking—Tall (5'7") blond, fit, very successful professional (own business). Love long lazy weekends and/or vacations in sunny climates. Enjoy fine dining, theater, movies, sports, but also happy staying in by the fireplace and opening a bottle of wine. Seek highly successful professional man, 40 plus, who is tall, very attractive and seeking a long-term relationship. Photo a must. 7254 ✉☎

Nice Jewish Guy, 47—Seeking wonderful Jewish woman, 30-45, for serious relationship. Nonsmoker. Let's have fun. Photo appreciated. Thanks. 7399 ✉

Renaissance Woman—Athletic, erudite blond adventurer seeks fit, intelligent soul mate. 35, 5'5", 102 lbs. 7321 ✉☎

Sociable Man—5'10", slim, divorced, 62, Christian, financially secure. Seeks attractive, compatible woman, to 55, to share NYC theater and restaurant delights. Note/photo/phone. 7362 ✉

Intelligent, Blue-Eyed Beauty—Warm, sensitive, playful, fit professional woman, 35 years old, loves theater, travel and new experiences. Seeking Jewish professional man, 35-45, warm, intelligent, sophisticated, who is interested in commitment and family. Photo, please. 7411 ✉☎

Kind, Pretty PhD—Warm, bright, upbeat Jewish gal, tall, svelte, fit, 40. Seeks creative man, tall, fit, with depth, humor, for lasting love. Photo. 7253 ✉ ☎

6'3", Italian Background Male—Professional, secure, educated, in shape, sensitive, playful, values, healthy, responsible, humorous, caring, successful, cultured, travel, outgoing, sentimental, passionate, never married but would love to be, Catholic, 47. Seeks well-schooled, fit, attractive, class lady, 30-43, NYC area, for friendship, romance, fun, sharing. Not selfish or too busy. Not afraid of the "C" word, no games. No prima donnas. Enjoys the simple things in life and a glass of Strega. Photo a must/note/home number. 7388 ✉

Very Handsome, Successful—Entrepreneur, 33, 6'2", 185 lbs, athletic, quasi-intellectual, adventurous, slightly offbeat, seeks a pretty, free-spirited woman with a good heart and a great passion for life. 7172 ✉ ☎

Caring, Dynamic Surgeon—Communicative, generous, handsome, supportive, really nice guy, affectionate, 5'10", muscular, 43. Into fitness, travel, culture, humor. Seeks vivacious, educated woman under 37, for an incredible life and romance. Phone/photo a must. 7306 ✉☎

Where Are You?—Recently widowed, early 60s, fun-loving, *beautiful, slim* blond seeks Jewish gentleman who is a snowbird, with homes in NY and FL. I enjoy golf, laughing, dancing, as well as cooking and staying at home. You must be at least 5'10", financially secure, *comfortable in casual clothes as well as* a tuxedo. Please be 55-70 years old and have a great sense of humor. 7458 ✉ ☎

Upbeat Chinese-American Male—38, 5'6", professional, sense of humor, ballroom dancing, jogging, movies, skiing, scuba. Seeks attractive single female, common interests, for laughter, romance and more. Photo appreciated. 7397 ✉

Unique, Genuine Woman—37, attractive, warm, caring, communicative, down-to-earth, with good sense of humor, seeks man with similar qualities. 7358 ✉☎

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Handsome, Athletic Executive—35 owns firm, Ivy grad, charming, seeks very attractive and caring woman 23-32, for relationship. 7341 ✉

My Mother Says—I'm beautiful, refined smart and funny - and my mother knows everything. I'm 35, Jewish, well-educated professional, very loyal. I'm seeking a ver intelligent, kind, honest, refined Jewish male counterpart - great sense of humo and good values. Note/photo. 7466 ✉

Petite, Feminine Woman—Willing to take long walks on the beach - if I have to I'll suffer through romantic dinners and sip red wine. I'm not fat; you shouldn't be either. You should be between 60 and 65 Note, please. No photo - I couldn't bear it Westchester/CT/NYC okay. 7452 ✉

Spunky, Pretty, 35, Female—Seeks tall cute man with a big...heart. 7433 ✉☎

CEO, Green-Eyed GQ Type—44, 6' trim, athletic, worldly, witty, kind, seeks an equal who is both bright and beautiful confident and feisty, very slim, 5'3" plus *20s-30s, for a committed relationship* Photo for reply; will exchange. 7423 ✉

Best Friend And Beyond—Incredibly cute 5'2", green eyes, fit, fun, athletic - seeks very attractive, athletic, fit Jewish guy, 38-43, 5'8" plus, who will make me feel laugh and think (and I you). Photo. 7453 ✉

Successful But Humble!—Handsome accomplished, fit, Jewish, 43, sports/clinical psychologist with charm, integrity, seeks pretty, slender lady, 30-44, with compassion, passion, for best friend lover for life. Note/photo/phone. 7380 ✉☎

And The Oscar Goes To...—You, if you would like to meet this very pretty, successful, cultured, athletic, slim, Jewish, 36, Manhattan business owner who enjoys the beach, ballet, skiing, Vermont and gourmet food. Note/photo/phone. 7459 ✉☎

Beautiful, Bright, Slim—Jewish female, athletic, fun to be with, 38, seeks Jewish professional male, 38-51. 7420 ✉ ☎

Fun-Loving—Human rights professional seeks fellow explorer (45-59) of the joys of life. If you love Captain Spaulding, Bach, Youssou N'Dour, let's meet. 7364 ✉

Tall, Blond And Handsome—6'. plus, 176 lbs, very athletic. Lives in Hamptons and NYC. Humorous personality, with true inner kindness and morals. Loves animals, NYC fun, my motorcycle and a relationship with a beautiful woman, 30-40. Photo, please. 7471 ✉

Beautiful MD, Asian, 32, 5'7"—100 lbs, sweet, accomplished - loves classical music, skiing, tennis, dancing. Seeks tall, handsome, single white male, 30-40, sincere, confident, extremely successful and accomplished. 7249 ✉ ☎

Divorced—63, 5'7", 175, Jewish, bald/grey. Seek a nearby, very slender, nonsmoking, much younger beauty for the real deal. Note/photo to: POB 1313, Seaford, NY 11783

Petite, Fun-Loving, Athletic—Professional woman, 36, into simple living, seeks nonsmoking, fit man with integrity, 30-50, who loves the outdoors, dogs and getting silly. Jersey preferred. 7170 ✉☎

Wanted:—Good-looking white male, 37-45, who's successful, sophisticated, in great shape, financially secure and emotionally available. Must have a great sense of humor (laughing is very important to me) and must enjoy adventure and romance as well as the finer and simpler things in life. I am all of the above and more. I'm a very attractive blond, blue-eyed woman who's vivacious, sensitive, fun, loving, intelligent, sensual and passionate, who wants to find you. Note and photo please - I will reciprocate. teesie626@aol.com. 7317 ✉ ☎

Pretty Blond/Blue—Great legs/smile, slim/shapely, 5'6", youthful 50. Am sweet, smart, sexy, warm, loyal, successful, affectionate. Love travel, arts, nature, you. Seek (nice) guy. Photo. 7384 ✉ ☎

Independent Woman—In mind and spirit, seeks a man she will totally respect as well as adore. A snowy weekend indoors or on the slopes is equally satisfying. Note and recent photo. 7359 ✉

Single White Male—Late 30s, Greek descent, very handsome, wealthy, ski in Aspen, summer in Hamptons/Europe, warm, caring, seeks attractive, sweet single female for long-term relationship. Note/photo. 7296 ✉ ☎

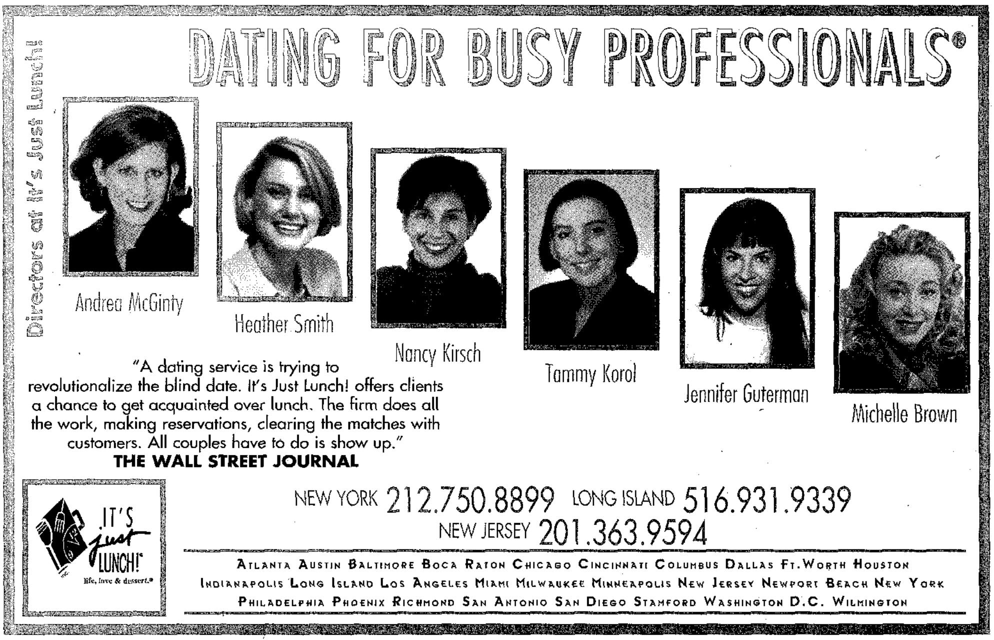
Beautiful, Ivy—Caring, 27, seeks successful, caring gentleman, 20s-40s. 7371✉☎

Elegant Manhattan Lady—With passion for theater, travel and the arts, seeks sincere, financially secure gentleman over 55. 7410 ✉

40, Divorced White Female—Physician, very attractive, intelligent, insightful, charming and active, seeks white male, 35-55, with similar attributes/education, for long-term relationship. 7286 ✉ ☎

Lover Boy—Energetic, romantic, handsome, fun Jewish male, 52, kind, communicative, successful, seeking the love of my life. Please write a note today with photo. Maybe we will meet soon! 7478 ✉

Spirited, Shapely, (914) Woman—51, looking for life to intersect with a caring, perceptive, deliciously delightful man. 7434 ✉ ☎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Seeking Soul Mate—Pretty, slim, witty executive who enjoys theater, working out, museums, restaurants and travel, seeks bright, fit, successful, caring Christian man, 50-60, with a sense of humor, traditional values, similar interests. Note/photo/phone. 7342 ✉ ☎

Artist—Seeks educated Jewish man, 60s, sense of humor, interest in travel. 7424✉

Jewish Male MD—44, seeks Jewish female MD, 32-40, to form our own little happy HMO. 7327 ✉ ☎

Self-Aware, Are You?—I am a divorced (no kids), 36-year-old, white, Jewish (nonreligious), honest man living on LI. I seek a positive, healthy relationship with a woman who is in touch with her feelings/herself and capable of honest communication (as I am). I stand 5'9" (husky build), brown hair/eyes/beard. E-mail: shwred@aol.com or 7240✉☎

Pretty, Vivacious, Fun-Loving—Greek-American brunette, fair, slim, never married. Likes dancing; open to exploring other amusements. Seeks 35-42, solid, fun, Christian, with sense of humor, for committed relationship. Note/photo. 7404 ✉☎

Cerebral Optimist—52, nonsmoking JD, tall and trim, arts lover, seeks sophisticated and sensual lady to share the best yet to come. 7386 ✉ ☎

Exotic, Brainy Woman—Seeks accomplished loving man, 43-53. 7403 ✉☎

A Great Catch—Wants to get caught! I'm tall, handsome (really), very successful, easygoing, Jewish, divorced and 50. You are under 45, pretty with curves, have a positive attitude and seek a true partner. Photo, please. 7421 ✉ ☎

Being A Nurse Is Not Just A Career—Compassion is my way of life - with people and animals. Humor gets me through every day, coupled with strong family ties. Traditional Jewish background. I'm an avid photographer, enjoy hiking in Wyoming or shopping at Costco. I'm serious about meeting a spirited, successful man around 50, nonsmoker, who can be wildly intuitive about a future together. 7461 ✉☎

Corporate Women—Have no time for me. Gentleman, 39, seeks companion. 7464✉☎

In China, It's The Year Of The Rabbit—And this blond, very pretty, Jewish, 28-year-old financial wiz wants to pull one out of the hat to find a tall, athletic, outgoing and funny charmer. Note/phone/photo, please. 7370 ✉

Good-Looking, Charming—Fun-loving, 62, divorced male business owner seeking male (40-50) with good sense of humor, sensuous, fun. Recent photo please. 7405✉

Handsome, Unique Attorney—Jewish, young 41, loves gym, NYC, golf, music. Seeks pretty, bright female, 24-39, tall a plus. Photo, please. 7350 ✉ ☎

Nice Guy Seeks Nice Woman—Average looks. Big smile. Lots of fun. 7354 ✉

Beauty And Brains—Warm brown eyes, loving heart, passionate soul, fit, active, fun-loving, sincere, pretty professional, eager to share diverse interests and to treasure a caring man who can laugh freely, love fully and is willing to celebrate life, 55-65. Prefer Jewish nonsmoker. 7304✉☎

Nice-Looking Guy—Down-to-earth newspaperman, 45, looking for 30-something woman, attractive, likes to laugh. Note/photo optional. 7283 ✉☎

A Classic Woman—With depth and substance, charming, resourceful, slim, pretty, petite, articulate, sensitive widow with quick wit and the ability to laugh at life's latest "crise du jour". Loves traveling, the comfort of home, luxury, the arts, living in NYC, antiques, good food. Seeks special partner and best friend, who is sincere, accomplished, good sense of self/humor, a solid, communicative, kind man, 60s-70s, into the arts, nature, travel...with depth and heart and a passion for living life. 7242✉☎

High-Quality Man—Single white male, 53, very intelligent, nice-looking, extremely honest, financially secure Westchester homeowner - seeks nice woman for great relationship. 7429✉☎

Sassy And Sophisticated—Vivacious, successful Jewish woman, 43, seeking charming, established NYC male (40s-50s), who enjoys fine dining, travel and football, for committed relationship. Note/photo. 7418 ✉ ☎

Chairman Of Foundation—Seeks compatible woman. Note/photo. 7300✉☎

NY Film Director—36, Ivy-educated, financially well-off, seeks slim, intelligent beauty, 22-28. Phone/note. 7262 ✉ ☎

Analyze This—Petite, attractive Jewish female, psychotherapist, 35, enjoys reading, movies, antiquing and exercise. Seeks professional, attractive, fun male, 32-43, with similar interests. 7309 ✉ ☎

Vivacious, Fit CT Redhead—Enjoys scintillating conversation, fine dining, film, theater, travel, photography. Seeks warm, sensitive male companion, 60s. 7318✉☎

Seeking Laughter, Joy And Passion—Forever. Male, 40s, smart, funny, affectionate and committed, loves children and will devote many hours to their conception and care. Note/photo. please. 7430 ✉

HIV-Positive—34-year-old woman, pretty, blond, intelligent, optimistic, seeks white, single, upbeat guy, 28-40, in same situation, for lasting relationship. No drugs. Must have car. 7442 ✉☎

Nice Jewish Girl With A Twist—Smart, funny, pretty, sane, kids' TV producer, 34, seeks bright, witty mensch, 30 to mid 40s, with an edge to match my twist. Note/photo/phone. 7177 ✉ ☎

Upper East Side Chick—Who prefers the East Village, 37, divorced Jewish female, petite and sexy, with lean runner's body, looking for a happy, secure man to romp with. Photo/bio required. 7322 ✉☎

Paradise In CT—Plus NYC culture. Super mensch, physician, youthful, nice-looking, active lifestyle, 60, seeks petite, slim Jewish woman. Note/photo a must (will reciprocate). 7408 ✉ ☎

London Transplant—Tall, elegant blond, 35-year-old female, new to NY. She's very attractive, slim and sophisticated. She hopes to meet a man who is high-quality, high-energy and fun to be with. Please be tall, 32-42, and like-minded. Note and photo requested. 7379 ✉

Young-Hearted, Soulful Man—Reflective, intuitive, seeks similar, fit beauty to share life. Attractive, athletic, professional, 6'2", runner, 47 - looks 37, looking for strong, understanding woman, mid 30s for possible long-term relationship. Note/photo/phone. 7400 ✉☎

Strictly Personals

Handsome, Successful Male—Athletic, kindhearted, affectionate, 5'9", fit, Jewish, 38, seeks an honest, sincere, special lady, 25-38, who's beautiful inside and out and is interested in building a relationship and a family. Religion not important. Note/photo/phone. 7185✉☎

My New Year's Resolution:—"Attractive, petite and fit", Italian, 39-year-old, fun-loving white professional lady seeking a 40-50-year-old gentleman. I would love to share my life with someone who laughs, cuddles and travels. From walking to world-traveling, I love to cook, ski and play golf. Be mine for the millennium. Note/photo. 7412 ✉

Cultured And Creative Guy—Wealthy (self-made), fit and handsome, early 60s, complex combination of artistic and business success, with wicked sense of humor. Slim, medium height, East Sider with international interests. Recently divorced. Jewish (unobservant), skier, hiker, biker, art and antique collector. Occasional obsessive-compulsive behavior (what did you expect?), seeking a very beautiful, 40s-early 50s, educated woman of substance (spiritual, professional, intellectual - not physical), who wants a shot at real intimacy in a committed relationship. Children welcome. Long fingernails, heavy makeup, smokers, pretension of any kind need not apply. Interested? Send recent photo and bio for response in kind. 7463✉

An Invitation—Attractive, petite, active, professional CT female seeks exceptional, accomplished, youthful, fit, stable, caring gentleman (53-63) for fun and romance. Love music, opera, arts, travel. 7387 ✉☎

Pretty, Sweet, Sincere And Nice—Attractive, well-educated NYC professional woman (5'5", Marcia Clark-type looks), nonsmoker, Jewish (nonreligious), seeks principled, well-educated, commitment minded, widowed or divorced NYC male, professional, nonsmoker, prefer also Jewish (not religious), 48-55. 7455 ✉

Single White Jewish Male—45, 6', 180 lbs, brown hair and brown eyes, lives in NJ, loves Jazz, NY Yankees, great food, traveling, movies and museums. Looking to settle down with single Jewish female, no children, 32-37, spiritual/religious, not into material wealth, kind, passionate, values honesty and believes actions speak louder than words. Photo, please. 7378✉

Rx For The New Millennium—Love, kindness, friendship, integrity, trust, marriage and family. Directions: to be taken by a Jewish male only, under 40, tall, attractive, successful JD, MD, CEO, investment banker, etc., who is a true mensch with traditional family values, personable, lots of fun, warm, giving, thoughtful, caring, nonsmoker, who enjoys NYC, fine dining, sports, theater, music, travel, dancing, and can appreciate the finer things in life with the very special woman I am - sensuous, slim, stunning blond, classy, successful Ivy attorney, under 30, 5'6", with beautiful legs and a golden heart. Warning: serious replies only. Side effects: a lifetime of happiness. Note/photo/phone, please. 7284 ✉☎

Teacher With Class—Pretty, vivacious, single Jewish woman, 30, sports fan who loves to laugh, seeks professional Jewish guy, 30-40, with good heart and great sense of humor. Note/photo/phone. 7374✉

Nice Guy—Blue-eyed, NJ, 38, Esq., seeks buxom Jewish gal, 30-35, who enjoys jazz, ethnic food, museums. 7437✉

The Guy Who Came In From The Cold—Single white Jewish male, 38, slim, handsome, learned, amusing, offbeat Manhattan professional seeks like-minded, slim, warmhearted Manhattan female, 28-35, who enjoys literature, films, museums, music, good restaurants and great talks. Interest in vintage films and sci-fi a big plus. 7383 ✉☎

Commute Nantucket/NYC—With a slender and pretty Jewish divorcee. Ready for a cultured man of humor, with athletic interests, who enjoys great cooking, 55-70. Private pilot optional. Photo. 7425✉☎

Sophisticated Lady—Slim blond. Lover of books, theater, arts and travel. Seeks kindred male spirit, 54 plus. 7320 ✉☎

Stunning, Slim, Athletic Brunette—38, 5'7", seeks tall, professional, athletic male whose interests may include skiing, cycling, cultural activities, etc. 7175✉☎

Not Your Typical Princess—Optimistic, 50-year-old Fairfield County woman with great looks, equally comfortable in a tent or at the Ritz, seeks nonsmoking companion for relationship and adventure. Recent travels include Cambodia and Serengeti. Looking for middle-aged guy with liberal instincts, who served in Peace Corps or wishes he had, emotional stability, financial security and physical sturdiness are big pluses. Sense of humor drifting from the silly to the obscene a must. Current photo much appreciated. 7428 ✉☎

Exotic—Smart professional, MBA, South American woman, 5'3", early 40s, well-traveled, loves art, hiking. Seeks marriage-minded, fit, upscale, under-46, handsome MD/JD type. Photo. 7369 ✉☎

41, Single Jewish Professional Male—Financially secure, from NJ, looking to meet single Jewish professional female, birth sign Pisces or Capricorn, nonsmoker, no kids, for dating. Photo appreciated. 7190 ✉☎

Divorced, Nonreligious—Jewish-flavored math professor, 69, 5'9", NYC, two children, Ivy League, bookish, seeks woman, 59-71, to share life of the mind. 7361 ✉

Cute, Classy—Early-50s professional female with looks, smarts, warmth, wit, seeks significant other. 7474 ✉☎

Great Legs And Infectious Laugh—Alluring, beautiful, fun, sweet Jewish lady with a gorgeous mane, 5'6", slim, 39, with sparkling personality, mischievous streak and a heart of gold (native Californian, new to NY), a passion for life and a love for tennis and skiing. You are kind, funny, warm, successful, fit, Jewish, 39-52, exceptional. Photo appreciated. 7422✉☎

Beautiful, Very Happy Woman—Living in Greenwich, CT, seeks great guy, 38-50, who is genuinely satisfied with his life and would like to share it with the right person. I'm loving, smart, adventurous, feminine, 42, and mom to a 7-year-old girl - in other words, a real catch. If you are bright, witty, love kids and family and are emotionally and financially secure (like me), please send note/photo. 7367✉

Asian-American, Pretty Woman—Seeks nonsmoking, intelligent professional or businessman, 45-55. Photo. 7276 ✉☎

One Good Man—DC/NYC, in search of several good women (just kidding!). Earthy, attractive Jewish male, late 40s, good-hearted, well-educated, with diverse interests, seeks contact and connection with upbeat, spontaneous, tall woman with engaging smile, sexy demeanor, independent yet intimate. If you catalyze the best in others, value friends and family, and have a good moral compass, please respond with a nongeneric note/recent photo/phone. 7337 ✉☎

NJ, Sexy Lady—37, Jewish, attractive and vivacious, seeks a handsome, romantic Jewish male, 35-45, who's ready to fall in like and end up in love! Photo/note/phone. 7470 ✉☎

The Pleasure Of Your Company—Invited by a warm, supportive, slim redhaired beauty of 51. You're definitely curious, extremely bright and probably tall. Character and integrity are more than words; emotional and financial security sine qua non. Finally, you're ready for fun, adventure and a best friend for the rest of your life. 7251 ✉☎

Knight For Pining Charmer—I am a 60-plus, reconstituted New Yorker who has become rejuvenated through eight years living in Boulder, CO. I love to ski, have a condo in the mountains; believe in physical fitness, enjoy outdoor activities; have a successful management consulting practice, travel the world; enjoy the arts, good food/wine/companionship, stimulating conversation; have a high energy level, sense of humor, empathy, positive attitude, love of adventure, zest for life. We should meet if you have style/class but enjoy wearing comfortable jeans; are committed to continuous learning, physical fitness; enjoy the arts, interesting people, international travel; are truly authentic; have a sense of humor, empathy, pioneering spirit, care about quality of life. 7432 ✉

Looking For Last First Date—I know you're out there - I see you everywhere. I'm very fit, handsome, sincere, successful, 40s, Italian-American. I love new experiences, beaches, sending flowers. Seeking very shapely, secure beauty, 30s, for lasting relationship. Note/photo. 7375✉☎

Does It Feel Weird—To scan the Personals? Then we're on the same page. Sexy, smart, attractive and somewhat acerbic strawberry blond, 5'4", one child, two dogs - seeks smart, quick-witted, financially secure guy, 40-55, to enjoy travel, restaurants, the gym. A sense of humor, low BS quotient and decent shoes a plus. Note, photo and phone. 7457 ✉

Handsome, Professional, Athletic—Venture capitalist, 38, looking for his Italian princess for relationship, family and to share everything that life has to offer. Must be beautiful, swarthy brunette, no children, Catholic, professional, under graduate degree a minimum, Manhattanite, 24-36. Please send letter and recent full color picture. 7451 ✉

Fabulous At 50—Pretty, slim professional seeks secure, worldly, special man for friendship, fun and romance. 7199✉☎

Bearded/Bearish—Architect/photographer - 68, loves good music, movies, cats, puns. Wants to share museums, concerts with a nonsmoking Manhattan woman. 7450 ✉☎

Professional Man—Late 60s (looks younger), slim, fit, nice-looking, warm, witty, affluent, seeks pretty, slim, well-educated woman, 55-60, free to travel, to share a good life. Photo, please. 7415✉

Attractive, Elegant Black Woman—Wall Street professional. Nest empty. Passionate. Loves travel, art, books and music. Seeking sincere, fit, financially secure and emotionally available man to share love and life. 7395 ✉

Blondes Prefer Gentleman—Professional, attractive, slim, single Jewish female, 36, blond/brown eyes, who is kind, successful, smart, independent, funny and family-oriented. Enjoys travel, theater, working out, music and socializing. Seeks professional, single Jewish male, 35-42, who is educated, successful, kind, funny, fit and family-oriented, for serious relationship. Note/phone. 7264✉☎

Exotic, Petite—43, looks 33, seeks her forever-sweet knight. Photo/note. 7323✉☎

Kind, Fun, Romantic—Jewish male, 44, enjoys reading, dining out and movies. Seeks full-figured Jewish female with similar interests, for friendship and possible long-term relationship. 7473✉☎

Caribbean Princess—Exotic Haitian beauty, petite, slim, passionate, with dazzling smile, mind and wit. Well-educated and stylish, with eclectic taste in music, movies, food, and travel. Seeks caring, romantic, intelligent, tall, handsome gentleman, 33-45. 7413 ✉☎

Distinguished-Looking—Successful man. Tall, grey-haired company president. Two residences. Enjoys classical music, travel, reading, sailing, riding, museums, dining and just hanging out. Interested in meeting a young woman, 35-41, slim, medium height, college grad, considerate, who shares some similar interests. Please write with photo/phone. Photo essential for reply. 7441 ✉

Healthy, Somewhat Wealthy—And sincere, single white male who is attractive (some even think good-looking), successful NYC business owner, 6'3", 205 lbs, early 50s, nonsmoker, athletic, divorced, emotionally open, playful, adventurous, mischievous and huggable, who appreciates the finer things in life. Seeking someone special to share real quality time in a giving/receiving long-term relationship. Please be at least 5'2", with a fabulous figure, slim/pretty, great legs, somewhat buxom, 32-42, size 8 or under, open, warm, caring, passionate, communicative, sensitive, unencumbered, and still believes in fairy tales (love). Photo and phone a must or no reply. 7445 ✉☎

Picture This—Attractive, 5'5", hazel-eyed Jewish female, young-looking 38, with great sense of humor and captivating smile. Likes movies/dining out/travel and cozy evenings at home. Seeks nonsmoking/warm/outgoing/intelligent male, 38-48, who can make me laugh. 7443 ✉☎

Ladies First—Very cute, sexy, wealthy, fit Jewish male, 33, seeks passionate, sexy, smart lady to pamper. Photo. 7290 ✉☎

Female MD—Manhattan/LI, attractive, high energy, empathic, Jewish. Film, theater, opera, jazz, travel, outdoor-loving, divorced mother of young adult. Seeking kind, confident single male, age 54-65, with similar interests and unafraid of commitment. 7482 ✉

\ Real First-Class Jewish Beauty—Educated, successful,· sophisticated lady seeks a real first-class Jewish gentleman who is as comfortable in the boardroom as he is on the beach. Only successful, attractive, serious gentlemen, 40-55, need respond. 7275 ✉ ☎

Vivacious, Upbeat And Down-To-Earth—LI lady seeks tall, sophisticated, 35-48 male for cultural outings and adventure. Photo/note required. 7465 ✉ ☎

Spring Fever—Vibrant, intelligent, pretty woman seeks soulmate, late 30s-late 40s, for laughter and love. 7402 ✉ ☎

Manhattan Is My Kind Of Island—Kauai is my kind of island; Easter Island is my kind of island. Elegant southern woman with NY flair invites you to come along. 7259 ✉ ☎

Westchester/CT—Very pretty blond, classy, Jewish, MBA, secure, funny, 5'6", size-8 woman with great smile, traditional values, no dependents and country home - who likes skiing, travel, tennis, reading, computers, NYC and dogs. Seeks attractive, 50-60ish man who values education, family, love and commitment. Photo. 7392✉

Attractive, Sophisticated Asian Female—:ccomplished artist, college professor. ves 60 miles north of NYC in Hudson alley. Enjoys biking, arts and culture, aveling. Seeks generous-natured, literate an, 36-50. Note/photo. 7390 ✉

ıst Looking Here For Laughs?—n handsome, 43, Jewish, an exec with :grees, an aspiring soul, and pecs that'll ake you weep. Refuse to give up finding ›u. Laughter's guaranteed. 7448 ✉ ☎

Polite Smartass?—If you can combine ealthy sarcasm with good manners, ıen this handsome, tall, 36-year-old piscopalian wants to meet you. I'm looking for a woman who will challenge me ith her intelligence, spontaneity and :nse of humor. She should be confident ›ut not pushy), private (but not shy) and ›mantic (but not sappy). I've a weakness ›r willowy figures and faces that look ood without makeup, but the other ualities are more important. Extra points you enjoy running, reading, sleeping, ploring, people-watching and dive bars. o ahead. Call. 7373 ✉ ☎

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ot A Life!—But I want to share it. andsome Jewish guy, nonreligious, 37, ', successful, fit, athletic, funny and ıtelligent. I enjoy the arts, all music, NYC ights, travel and stimulating conversation. you are a Jewish woman, 27-35, smart, retty and fit, who seeks mutual personal rowth, please send note/photo. 7298 ✉☎

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ligh-Energy Brazilian Journalist—/ith authorization to work, gay, 9, handsome, sensitive, seeks Wall treet executive to share love and fe. Maybe build a family? 7475 ✉

Am:—5'3", pretty, blond, smart, thletic, thin, 34, journalist. I love: 'indsurfing, Maui, skiing, running/ 'alking, reading, rollerblading, travel, hotography. I want: a great guy, 30-45, › share these things with. 7366 ✉☎

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an You Shuck Oysters?—Seeking tall ıan with great hands, 33-43. Stuffed shirt /ith an edge. Adventurer. Damn funny.)evoted yet independent and active. Me: 5, happily single but prefer to have it all. oth: very successful, athletic, classic ood looks, shocked to be meeting like ıis. Yikes! Should we? Photo. 7454 ✉

Attractive, Compassionate, Cultured—Professional woman, 50, with intellectual vitality, seeks compatible male. 7477✉☎

Life Is Beautiful With A Simple Plan—Successful international entrepreneur, 39, 5'9", handsome with great eyes, very classy, ambitious, athletic, adventurous, with a passion for travel, fine dining and culture, great listener, with sense of humor, who seeks a very attractive, athletic, vivacious, sophisticated Jewish brunette, 30s, career-oriented, with a balanced lifestyle, who wants to share the same interests for a lifetime and make this plan simple to achieve. Photo a plus/note. 7333 ✉ ☎

Beautiful, Bright, Blue-Eyed Brunette—Model looks, tall, slender, shapely, elegant, feminine, warm, caring, cultured, playful, passionate - has style, wit, charm, international upbringing - attorney, 37, Jewish. Into opera, the arts, antiques, skiing, dogs, luxe travel/dining. Seeks refined, worldly, manly, giving, sexy, handsome, highly educated, very successful Renaissance man, 30s-40s, 6' plus, Jewish, with elegance, old world manners, heart of gold, integrity, superior intellect, great sense of humor, for romance, marriage and kids. Photo and note. 7346 ✉ ☎

Exotic, Sensuous, Hispanic-Italian—Female, early 40s, educated, seeks successful nonsmoker, ready for love, passion, romance. Photo. 7435 ✉☎

Thin, Pretty, Shapely, Long Hair—30, 5'7", Jewish, sweet, old-fashioned. Seeks educated, shy man, NJ/NY. Fun: music/science/law/parks/kisses! 7257✉☎

Elegant, Sensuous, Charming—Intelligent, affectionate, caring, very pretty, young 40s, blond, green-eyed, slim and fit (5'3", 105 lbs) professional. Interests include music, theater, arts, beach. Seeks professional, emotionally and financially secure man, 42-52, who's intelligent, communicative, handsome, fit, fun, sincere, over 5'11". Photo. Write or call. 7278✉☎

Successful Thousandaire—Balanced, solid, warm and well-respected, divorced Jewish man, 49 (5'11", 160 lbs), seeks Jewish female, feminine and sensitive, loves children; interests include Judaism, classical music, parenting. 7391 ✉ ☎

Let's Do Lunch!—Pretty, petite MBA, 35, Jewish ad exec (who looks great in jeans) seeks down-to-earth, intelligent male, 32-45. Note/photo. 7357 ✉

Loves To Laugh—Single Jewish female, 30, 5'6", attractive, physically fit teacher, in search of intelligent, reflective thinker, 30-40. Enjoys the outdoors a plus; good conversationalist a must. 7409 ✉☎

Pretty Special—LI, Jewish professional female, 36, petite, thin - loves to travel, cook and watch sporting events. Seeks good-looking, 32-40, professional Jewish male who is warm, romantic, health-conscious and values family and friends. Photo helpful. 7363 ✉ ☎

Attractive, Classy, Sexy, English—Female, slim, blond, late 40s, affectionate, bright and easy to be with - seeking same, plus laughter and love in tall, secure, successful man for serious relationship. Workaholic welcome but be prepared to make some time to play. 7447 ✉☎

Loving And Affectionate—Jewish male, 59, seeks a happy, secure, loving Caucasian female for a committed relationship. 7281 ✉ ☎

SENSUOUS & SWEET

Alluring 27 year old, 5'1" 118lb ambitious art collector and real estate broker is yearning for her best friend and soulmate. She is an affectionate, outgoing kosher cutie who enjoys engaging conversation, long walks, museums, movies, theater, travel and Judaic studies. This honey blonde hazel-eyed shapely beauty seeks a warm, kind, well-educated, self-assured, family-oriented successful mensch who values honesty, companionship and sharing a loving traditional home. If you are a broad, muscular, athletic, handsome romantic and look foward to cozy candlelight dinners, please call Raizy for your complimentary introduction to this great gal.

Fine Art of Matchmaking

212.877.5167

Executive Search for Discerning Jewish Professionals

Treasure Seekers!—Unearth this rare gem: smart, passionate, sweet, single white female, 29 - loves travel, beach, cats, Woody Allen movies. Seeking good-natured, rational, fun, single white male, 29-36. (Clinton apologists need not apply.) Note/photo appreciated. 7355 ✉

Not Just A Pretty Blond—But a great mom, 5'7", blond, blue eyes, 120 lbs, looking for a gentleman, 40 something, 5'11" plus, caring and happy with his life. 7406✉

Stop! Don't Answer This Ad—Unless you are a qualified white male, 55-65, NYC and Westhampton, who's alive, alert, and ready to laugh. 7476 ✉

Nice Guy—51 (I am a smoker), looking for lady, 35-45. I like movies, dining, bowling and Atlantic City. 7467 ✉

Introspective Jewish Male—45, easy on the eyes, seeks compassionate, spiritual, playful Jewish female, 30-47, who likes the written word, nature, culture, learning, thinking and laughing. 7417 ✉ ☎

Turning The Page—Divorced female, 41, 5'6", holding tryouts. Want leading man, 38-48, passionate, sincere and funny, for romantic comedy and who knows what else?... Photo/note. 7265✉☎

Wanted: Someone To Be Adored—Male total package seeks female total package, 40-50. Right person will never want for anything. Photo, please. 7287 ✉ ☎

Truly—Pretty, engaging, loving professional woman seeks smart, kind, personable, Jewish, 50ish man. Note/photo. 7271 ✉ ☎

Beautiful Blond Rockette—Seeks very handsome, athletic, silly man of substance, 37-50, 5'10" and up. Photo please and a great note. 7349 ✉ ☎

Novice—To this and soon the NYC marathon. 42, professional, Catholic woman looking to push the envelope with a happy, kind, secure man, 38-48. Note/photo/phone. 7282 ✉ ☎

Have Car, Will Travel—Attractive, Brooklyn Jewish female, 55, auditor, wants you: financially secure male. 7256 ✉☎

Attractive, Petite, 37—Single Jewish female, MD, with long brown hair, green eyes and dancing feet, seeking professional, tall, handsome, athletic mensch. Note/photo appreciated/phone. 7456✉☎

Great Guy!—This professional, successful, athletic, outgoing, 40-year-old, single Jewish male, Manhattan resident, 6'2", brown hair, hazel eyes, desires a happy, attractive, smart and sexy woman to share fun, love and life. Note/photo, please. 7382 ✉ ☎

Model Looks, Scholar's Mind—Sage's heart, artist's touch, mid 30s, tall, fit, wealthy, Jewish. Seeks super-special woman for marriage and children. Note/photo. 7292 ✉ ☎

Jersey Shore Marathon Man—5'8", 144 lbs, good-looking, low-key, youthful 53. Jewish Ivy PhD who lives in jeans and is dedicated to health and fitness. Enjoys the arts, vegetarian dinners, running, Manhattan, Jersey beaches. Seeks best friend who is an attractive, athletic, slim, nonsmoking, down-to-earth woman under 45. Photo appreciated. 7419 ✉☎

Literary Lioness—Mid 40s, fit, attractive, seeking mate for adventures wild and domesticated. Please be a man who lives his passions with room for one more. Photo nice but not necessary. 7440 ✉ ☎

Funny Writer/Exhibit Designer—Who believes good relating equals new vision, seeks female to age 50, tall, loves NY, passionate about the arts. 7356 ✉

Global View—Pretty, slender blond, likes fine art, finance, language and France. Good traveler. Seeks perceptive professional man with street smarts and social skills (35 plus). 7360 ✉

Fairy Tales Do Come True—Beautiful, romantic, sexy, sophisticated and spirited, 40-something princess awaits her loving and successful Jewish prince. He writes, then they live happily ever after. 7316✉☎

Pianist—Fit, fun male seeks female, 20-40. I love karate, writing, the outdoors and laughing. Note/photo/phone. 7268 ✉ ☎

Wanted: Sensible, Witty Professional—Who loves children, nature and the arts. I am 49, petite, attractive, well-educated professional, divorced mother of a 12-year-old daughter, nonsmoker. Letter and photo. 7414 ✉ ☎

For Rent With Option To Buy—Sincere, fun-loving male, 37, 5'7", into skiing, beach, NYC, concerts, seeks "nice" female. Available immediately! 7385✉☎

Strictly Personals

Striking Brunette—Warren, NJ professional woman, 5'9", comfortable in high heels as well as hiking boots, seeking successful gentleman, 38 plus. If your interests run from the extravagant to life's simple pleasures, have a positive attitude, a passion for ballroom/swing dancing, and love animals, this could be a match. Note/photo, please. 7352 ✉ ☎

Asian Female—32 years old, professional, attractive, smart. Seeking single, 30-40, white male professional, romantic and has a good heart. 7439 ✉

Life's Too Short Not To Have Fun!—Adventurous, energetic, highly successful, 39-year-old entrepreneur seeks petite, shapely, adventurous, very sensual, "bikini clad", fun female, age 25-35, to wine, dine, dance and travel the world's beaches. P.S. I'm planning an exotic vacation for both of us real soon! Photo a must. Note/phone. 7449 ✉ ☎

Bi/Gay Female Needed For Cover—And more. Good-looking, masculine, private-lifestyled male, 30s, gym body, educated, successful, with great lifestyle, seeks nonsmoking, financially secure, feminine beauty with zest, maternal desires and a great body, mind and soul. 7274✉☎

Why Are You Still Single?—Because I haven't found you. Jewish professional male, 31, seeks beautiful, intelligent, kind Jewish female, 24-32, for dating and maybe more. Photo, please. 7368 ✉

Gay Female, 44—Attractive, sporty fem professional, 5'8", blond/blue, into golf, biking, sports, NYC, FI/Provincetown, dining, seeks similar intelligent, romantic, relationship-oriented gay female, 40 plus. LI preferred. 7279 ✉ ☎

Princess Leia Seeks Mate—Not dates. Need your photo and note. You: under 50, tall, lean, creative and reliable. Me: 40, psychoanalyst, thin, shapely. 7332 ✉ ☎

Bright, Attractive Jewish Woman—Secure (emotionally and financially), unpretentious, cultured, with balanced and healthy lifestyle, seeks soul mate, 41-51, under 6'. Drop me a note/photo. 7329✉☎

Attractive, Green-Eyed, Svelte Woman—Of 39, with dog, seeks kind, sensitive, handsome, tallish, nonsmoking Catholic man, 34-45. Photo/note. 7396 ✉☎

LI, East Hampton, Petite Brunette—Pretty, slim, smart, educated, caring, loving, widow, 39, mother of two, variety of interests, looking for a long-lasting relationship with a family-oriented, successful, secure white male, 45-52. 7389✉☎

Animal Lover—5'8", lean redhead who is warm, sensitive and loving, looking to begin the rest of my life with a warm, caring, loving, professional or doggie doc. Please send photo. 7436 ✉

NYMessage

Professional Man—30, *attractive, wishes* to father a child with kind, responsible woman. Note/photo. 7407 ✉

All Seekers—Let's take a shortcut and meet on the eve of spring, 3/19, 6:30pm, Petrie Court, Met Museum. 7372 ✉☎

Gay White Female—36, educated, pretty, stylish femme seeks passionate partner with post-graduate degree, to share hopes and dreams. 7381 ✉ ☎

Gay White Guy—Late 40s, nice-looking, normal, nice, healthy, successful career/ into theater, film, music, NYC/not in the "scene". Photo/phone/letter. 7377 ✉☎

Assortments

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NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

Tim of Athens

Standard Ooperating Procedure

I came, I saw, I caught a cab.

Above, 6-Up. Competitors are invited to provide the near-miss version of one name, title, business, or familiar phrase.

Results of Competition 933, in which you were asked to designate an inappropriate spokesperson for a well-known product or service.

Report: First rate among duplicates: Mark McGwire for Goodyear. Also: Bill Gates for Monopoly. Lewinsky for Obsession, Starr for Trivial Pursuit. L. Tripp for Memorex. B. Clinton for 9 Lives. J. Dahmer for Hamburger Helper. Kate Moss for *Rolling Stone*. M. Antoinette for Sara Lee. Lauren Hutton for the Gap. L. Helmsley for H&R Block. C. Flockart for Hefty. We ranged from the dead-on (Xena for Amazon.com) through the insufficiently anomalous, uh, speakpeople. But all of them witches. Thanks. You're a silly lot, but you're ours and we love you.

First prizes of two-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

Michael Jordan for A.A.R.P.
Andrew Koenig, N.Y.C.; David M. C. Stern, N.Y.C.

J. Edgar Hoover for Victoria's Secret
Jan Leighton, N.Y.C.

Thomas Jefferson for Pop Secret
Inger Pettygrove, Charlottesville, Va.

Runner-up prizes of one-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

Tito Jackson for Hasbro
F. R. Coyne, Narbeth, Pa.

Sisyphus for Rolling Rock
Bob Edwards, Galena, Mo.

Evander Holyfield for Tyson Foods
Chris Doyle, Burke, Va.

And Honorable Mention to:

Lord Lucan for Mr. Goodbar
Elisa Falciglia, Reston, Va.

Whoopi Goldberg for Yahoo!
Mike Reiss, Los Angeles, Calif.

Gomer Pyle for Yahoo!
Eileen Luzon, No. Attleboro, Mass.

Vito Corleone for Sunkist
Wendy Wolther, N.Y.C.

Emile Zola for the Dreyfus Fund
Susan Harriman, San Francisco, Calif.

Don King for Chia Pets
Dana Freed, Huntington, N.Y.

Clint Eastwood for Ziploc
Lilian Kleger, East Meadow, N.Y.

Camille for Saab
Elaine Gangloff, Amityville, N.Y.

Desdemona for Kleenex
David Michael, Regina, Sask.

Savion Glover for Tappan
Meghan Foley, Cranston, R.I.

Marv Albert for Karastan Rugs
Vivian Fleishaker, N.Y.C.

Count Dracula for Louisville Slugger
Louis G. Raffel, N.Y.C.

Eve Harrington for Avis
Mike Olton, Long Beach, Calif.

Mercedes Ruehl for BMW
Dan Rosenberg, Warren, N.J.

Robin Williams for Diazepam
Patricia O. Simmons, Ann Arbor, Mich.

David Duke for Nobody Beats the Wiz
Alan Povich, New Brunswick, N.J.

Farrah Fawcett for NASA
Jeff Brawer, Brookline, Mass.

Sue Grafton for ABC Warehouse
Shirley Brandsen, Seeland, Mich.

Jimmy Hoffa for Vanish
Skip Gross, Hoboken, N.J.
similarly: Charles Lubetkin, Springfield, N.J.

Shirley MacLaine for Easy Spirit
Jerry Cohen, Hartsdale, N.Y.

Newt Gingrich for Right Guard
Ron Woodall, Kissimmee, Fla.

John Wayne Bobbitt for Chubb Insurance
Jim Cooper, Plainsboro, N.J.
sp. ment.: Bruce Karp, Hackensack, N.J.

Lucianne Goldberg for Dirt Devil
Jack Westmoreland, Sterling, Va.

Dorothy Parker for *Horticulture* magazine
Bobby J. Ward, Raleigh, N.C.

Beverly Sills for Moët & Chandon
Roy C. Dicks, Raleigh, N.C.

Lana Turner for Charles Schwab
Paula Doherty, Tiverton, R.I.

Rose Mary Woods for the Gap
Patsy V. Felmet, Wintersville, Ohio; Aaron Ehrlich, N.Y.C.; Marvin Haas, Banning, Calif.

e e cummings for Capitol Records
Susan Krowitz, Port Washington, N.Y.
sp. ment.: Donald Leighton, Jersey City, N.J.

Leroy Neiman for *Sports Illustrated*
James L. Lyons, Arlington, Va.

J. D. Salinger for *People* magazine
Raphael Shells, Sunnyside, N.Y.

Cheech and Chong for Roach Motel
Bill Harriman, Niantic, Conn.

Dustin Hoffman for Tootsie Roll
Brian Bracey, Carrboro, N.C.

Steve Lawrence for Edy's Gourmet Ice Cream
Sarah Gay, Atlanta, Ga.

Hume Cronyn for Tandy
Marc Doyle, Newark, Del.

Kiri Te Kanawa for Hi-C
Lucy Oblonsky, Newark, Del.
similarly: Gail Goldman, Forest Hills, N.Y.

Vlad for Staples
J. D. Reinecker, Lakewood, Ohio

Doris Kappelhoff for Day-Glo
Lisa Giordano, Madison, Ala.

Norman Mailer for Deer Park
Karen Bracey, Burke, Va.

Meryl Streep for Accent
Deborah Sabarra, West Palm Beach, Fla.

Quasimodo for Taco Bell
Lane Collins, Halifax, N.S.

Captain Kangaroo for IHOP
Jan Persson, Mundelein, Ill.
similarly: Barbara Alpren, West Orange, N.J.

Cher for Sony
H. M. Schwalb, Oakland, Pa.
also: Craig Wolfson, Westbury, N.Y.

Gerald Ford for the Wallendas
Roz Stone, Oak Park, Mich.

Paul Reubens for London Fog
Jim Rupert, Akron, Ohio

Helen Hunt for Mrs. Paul's
Susan Karp, N.Y.C.

Job for Prozac
J. Bickart, N.Y.C.

R2D2 4 10-10-321
Jasper Rosenberg, Somerville, Mass.

Jim Carrey for Rubbermaid
Howie Priebe, Meriden, Conn.

Salvador Dali for Timex
Elaine Stallworth, New Port Richey, Fla.

Venus de Milo for Rolex
Nancy Sabarra, N.Y.C.

J. Alfred Prufrock for Del Monte Cling Peaches
Dave Rapp, New City, N.Y.

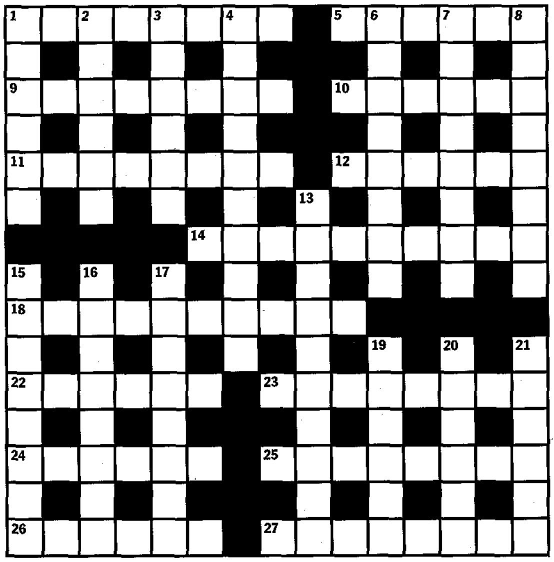
Albert Einstein for Infiniti
Dr. Ann K. Warren, Chagrin Falls, Ohio

(continued on page 96)

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 Painting in water-colours. (8)
5 Animal with a firm back bearing a great deal. (6)
9 Owner distracted after vehicle gets crushed. (8)
10 How marching men proceed—on foot. (6)
11 The cartoonist is a Roman, it turned out. (8)
12 Prepares for take-off. (6)
14 Pernickety individual. (10)
18 Malaise causing some resentment. (3-7)
22 Giving the little page an increase in pay to express appreciation. (6)
23 Practically of the same value. (2,4,2)
24 Country lovers. (6)
25 Help backward ethnic group and there's much criticism. (8)
26 Elegant flat without character. (6)
27 None left unharmed? (3,5)



DOWN

1 Gathering coal is being ordered. (6)
2 Expert—as French drivers go. (6)
3 Ranch hand who's cold with devious woman. (6)
4 Written by the boy friend himself. (10)
6 Undertaking to cut down. (8)
7 Person refusing drink—really resolved about this of late. (8)
8 Finding records are irksome material. (8)
13 Good men holding with damaging stoppage. (10)
15 The underworld boss struck an attitude when so inclined. (8)
16 Prison in which curtailed liberty has caused deep division. (8)
17 Farming folk supplying vegetables to the workers. (8)
19 Tinker, a writer of stories for children. (6)
20 Tacking onto a minister—popular German leader. (6)
21 Face coppers in a body. (6)

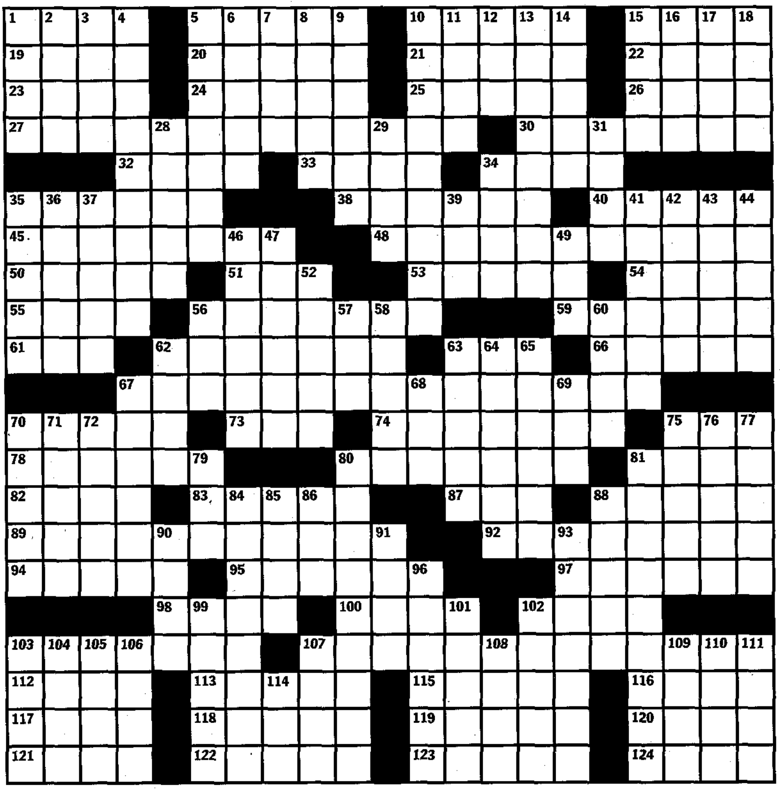
'Vowel Play': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

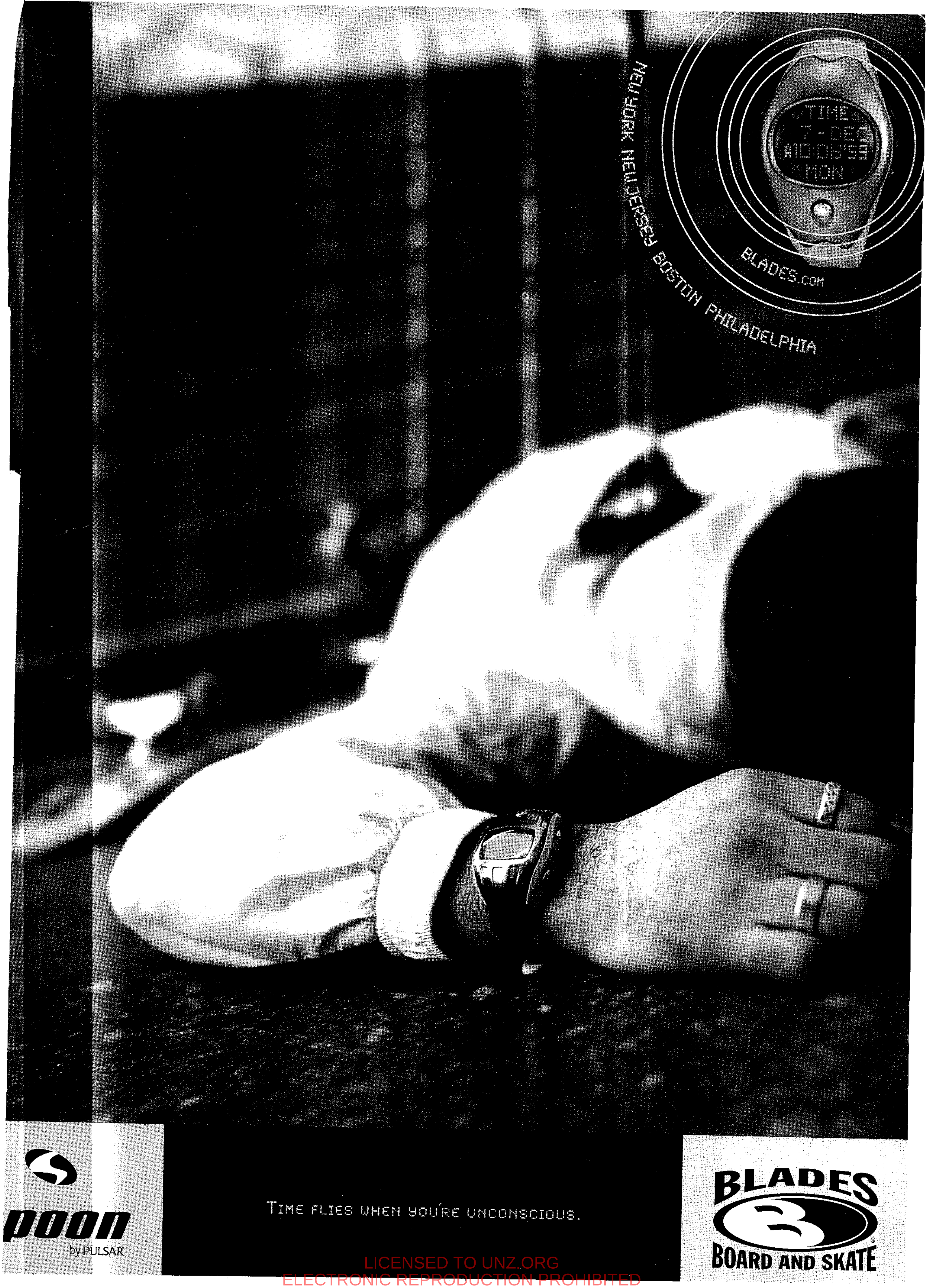
1 Beginning on
5 Start of a toast
10 Marry on the Q.T.
15 "Don't Throw Bouquets ——"
19 Lugubrious Lugosi
20 Separated
21 Autumn zodiac sign
22 Not this
23 Bric-a-——
24 Make a double knot
25 Great Lake Indians
26 Student's book
27 Word with five E's
30 Seven-letter word with all five vowels
32 Golf-ball props
33 Very much
34 Andes land
35 Bouquet items
38 Flower's pollen producer
40 At a good clip
45 Confronted rudely
48 Word with five A's
50 Early movie cowboy Lash ——
51 Circle segment
53 Prefers
54 Rich soil
55 Yale team
56 Fit for functioning: var.
59 Small-dress category
61 Tree juice
62 Toronto province
63 Motorist's buy
66 City of Provence
67 Word with all five vowels in backwards order
70 Form of bingo
73 Abbr. in Albany
74 Heads for bed
75 Beige
78 Connected to the Internet
80 Rock vocalist Pat
81 "State Fair" state
82 Butterfingers' cry
83 Slower than adagio
87 Tit for ——
88 Magnani namesakes
89 Word with four O's
92 Kin of the marlin
94 Higher —— kite
95 Small-time
97 Trite expression
98 Foot quintet
100 Power source
102 Menotti's first name
103 Seven-letter word with no vowels
107 Word containing E-I-E-I-O
112 Birthday interval
113 Needed a doctor
115 Disney's little mermaid
116 Himalayan hike
117 Ending for citron or salmon
118 Waste maker, proverbially
119 Uptight
120 Detached bit of land
121 Tenement area
122 Bought into a poker game
123 Trims the rim
124 "Gone," at auctions

DOWN

1 French cleric
2 Vassal's acquaintance
3 Norwegian saint
4 Word with all the vowels in order
5 Bring in the crop
6 Rapiers' relatives
7 Double-crossers
8 Susan Lucci's "All My Children" role
9 Pittsburgh products
10 Qualified to get votes
11 Trevi throw-ins
12 Kimono cummerbund
13 Opposite of absence
14 Shoehorn, e.g.
15 Outermost Aleutian
16 Van Gogh's brother
17 Ankle-length skirt
18 Kett of old comics
28 Della of "Touched by an Angel"
29 Half of N.B.
31 Short for a thigh muscle
34 Mountaintop
35 Loses color
36 Central Florida city
37 Emergency currency
39 Med. diagnostic procedure
41 Of negligible value
42 Bubbling on the stov
43 Wooden packing box
44 Famed chair designe
46 "For Your Eyes Only singer Sheena
47 Like a reverie
49 Pharaoh's sacred serpent
52 Belabors a point
56 Pop's bro
57 Puppeteer Baird
58 France's longest rive
60 Antony's loan reques
62 "—— you noblest English!": Shak.
63 Apply oneself to
64 Hill and Loos
65 Geological layers
67 Togetherness
68 Stag-line members
69 With Lingus, Irish airline
70 Give a leg up
71 Cain's eldest son
72 Greek vowel
75 Pick-me-up
76 Flooded with water
77 16th C. satirist
79 Angled annex
80 Attacked with explosives
81 Cars with four I's
84 Kind of well
85 Plies the oars
86 Gunk
88 —— once (suddenly)
90 Swearword
91 Location
93 Eaves drops
96 Up till now
99 Gerald Ford's birthplace
101 Stuck in the mud
102 Sillies
103 Sandwich breads
104 Satan's environs
105 China–North Korea border river
106 Cable car
107 Netman Sampras
108 Ding-a-——
109 Thereabouts
110 Jodie Foster film, 199
111 Timetable, informally
114 Assault boat of WW



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 7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